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THE REV. SYDNEY SMITH.

LIVES

OF

WITS AND HUMOURISTS.

DEAN SWIFT.
SIR RICHARD STEELE.
SAMUEL FOOTE.
OLIVER GOLDSMITH.
THE TWO COLMANS.
R. BRINSLEY SHERIDAN.
RICHARD PORSON.
REV. SYDNEY SMITH.
THEODORE HOOK.
JAMES AND HORACE SMITH.

25629

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AUTHOR OF "CURIOSITIES OF LONDON," "ANECDOTE BIOGRAPHY OF PAINTERS," ETC.

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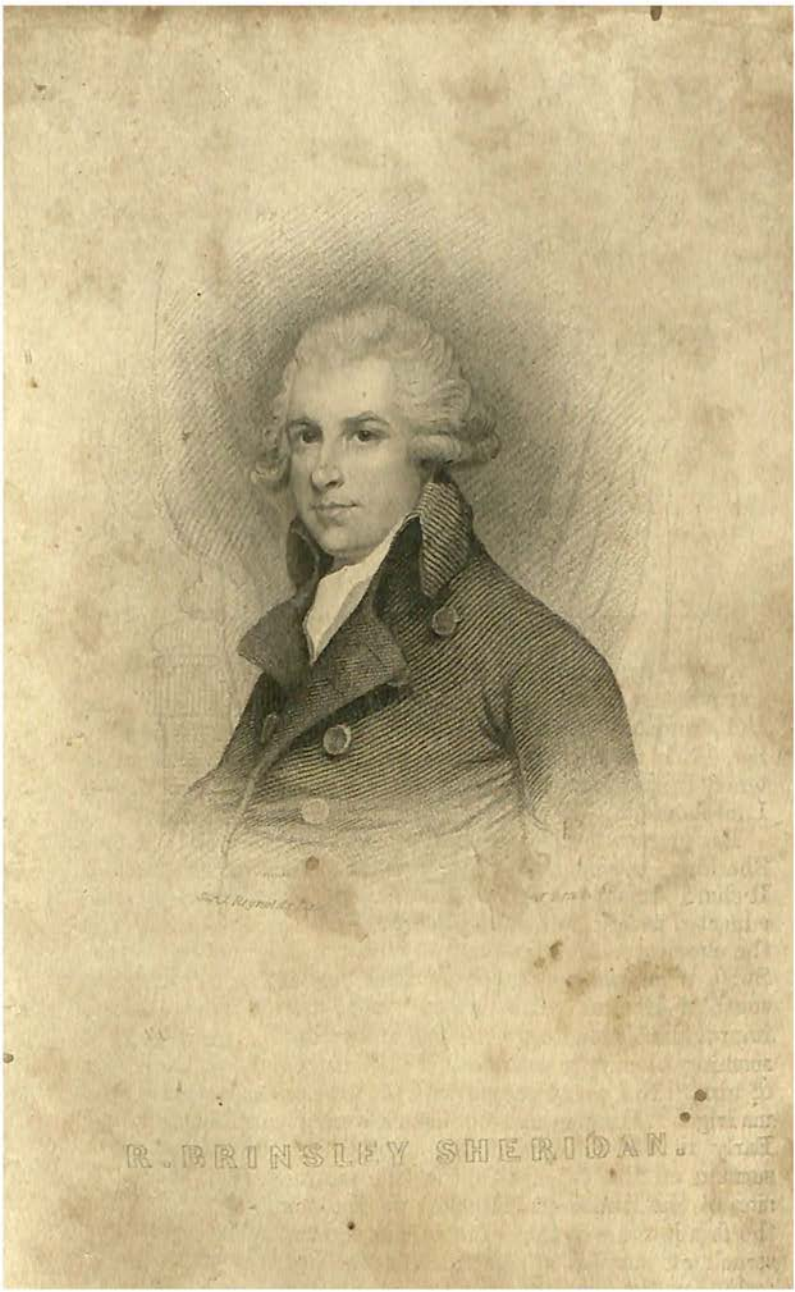

R. BRINSLEY SHERIDAN.

ANECDOTE BIOGRAPHY.

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN.

THE SHERIDANS.—RICHARD BRINSLEY BORN.

It rarely happens that the heritage of genius can be more immediately traced than in the parentage of the wit, orator, and dramatist, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, born in September, 1751, at No. 12, Dorset-street, Dublin. He was christened in St. Mary's Church, after Brinsley Butler, Earl of Lanesborough, though he usually dropped the "Butler."

His grandfather, Dr. Sheridan, and his father, Mr. Thomas Sheridan, attained a celebrity independent of that which Richard Brinsley conferred on them. Dr. Sheridan was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, distinguished himself in the classics, took orders, and then set up a school in Dublin. Swift, who was his friend, obtained for him a living in the south of Ireland. But he was "an ill-starred, good-natured, improvident man," careless and indigent, his animal spirits seeming to supply every other deficiency. Lord Cork says of him, "Not a day passed without a rebus, an anagram, or a madrigal. His pen and fiddlestick were in continual motion." Early in life he spoiled his expectations by preaching a sermon on the 1st of August, (the anniversary of the accession of the House of Hanover) on the text, "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof;" in consequence of which he was struck off the list of chaplains to the Lord-Lieutenant, and forbidden the Castle.

Thomas Sheridan, M.A., the author of the *Dictionary of the English Language*, was born at the residence of Swift, who was his godfather, and treated him with uniform kindness. He was educated at Westminster School, and afterwards entered Trinity College, Dublin, where he took his degree. He had an extravagant idea of oratory, with a view to the restoration of which he devoted himself to the stage with success; some of his friends injudiciously set him up as a rival to Garrick. He then became manager of the Dublin Theatre. But he resumed his favourite study of oratory, upon which he lectured extensively. He then returned to the stage, and was for a short time manager of Drury-lane Theatre. Besides his *Pronouncing Dictionary*, he produced a *Life of Swift*. He figures in *Churchill's Rosciad*, and is by turns severely criticised and highly panegyrised:

> "View the whole scene, with critic judgment scan,
> And then deny him merit if you can,
> Where he falls short 'tis Nature's fault alone,
> Where he succeeds the merit's all his own."

Frances Sheridan, wife to the above, and mother of the wit, was a woman of considerable talents; and "affords one of the few instances that have occurred of a female indebted for a husband to her literature; as it was a pamphlet she wrote for the Dublin Theatre that first attracted to her the notice of Mr. Thomas Sheridan. Her affecting novel, *Sidney Biddulph*, could boast among its warm panegyrists Mr. Fox and Lord North; and Dr. Johnson said of it that he doubted whether "upon moral principles she was at liberty to put any one to so much pain as her story had put him." In the *Fall of Nourjahad*, she has employed the graces of Eastern fiction to inculcate a great and important moral. She also wrote two plays, *The Discovery*, and *The Dupe*,* the former of which Garrick pronounced to be one of the best comedies he ever read. She likewise wrote the comedy of the *Trip to Bath*, which was never either acted or published. Dr. Parr spoke of her as "quite celestial: both her virtues and her genius were highly esteemed."

We have seen that the literary labours of her husband

* Walpole writes to the Earl of Hertford, Dec. 16, 1763: "We have had a new comedy, (*The Dupe.*) written by Mrs. Sheridan, and admirably acted; but there was no wit in it, and it was so vulgar that it ran but three nights." The *Biographia Dramatica* says it was condemned "on account of a few passages which the audience thought too indelicate."

were chiefly devoted to subjects connected with education. Such dignity, indeed, did his favourite pursuit assume in his own eyes, that he is represented, (on the authority, however, of one who was himself a schoolmaster) to have declared that he would rather see his two sons at the head of respectable academies, than one of them prime minister of England, and the other at the head of affairs in Ireland."

SHERIDAN'S FIRST SCHOOL.

At the age of seven years Richard Brinsley was, with his eldest brother, Charles Francis, placed under the tuition of Mr. Samuel Whyte, of Grafton-street, Dublin, to whose zeal and gentleness as a master Mr. Thomas Moore, in his *Life of Sheridan*, acknowledges that he owed all the instructions in English literature he had ever received.

The young Sheridans were, however, at Mr. Whyte's school little beyond a year. Moore, in his *Autobiography*, mentions this circumstance of Richard:—"So early as 1758, a boy had been entrusted to this gentleman's care, whom, after a few years' trial, he pronounced to be 'a most incorrigible dunce.' This boy was no other than the afterwards celebrated Richard Brinsley Sheridan; and so far from being ashamed of his mistake, my worthy schoolmaster had the good sense often to mention the circumstance, as an instance of the difficulty and rashness of forming any judgment of the future capacity of children.

"The circumstance of my having happened to be under the same schoolmaster with Sheridan, though at so distant an interval, has led the writer of a professed memoir of my life, prefixed to the Zwinckian edition of my works, into rather an amusing mistake:—'His talents,' he is pleased to say of me, 'dawned so early, and so great attention was paid to his education by his tutor Sheridan, that,'" &c.—*Memoirs of Myself*, p. 7.

Moore pithily observes on these indications of Richard Brinsley's boyhood:—

"It may be consoling to parents who are in the first crisis of impatience, at the sort of hopeless stupidity which some children exhibit, to know, that the dawn of Sheridan's intellect was as dull and unpromising as its meridian day was bright; and that in the year 1759, he who, in less than thirty years afterwards held senates enchained by his eloquence, and audiences fascinated by his wit, was, by common consent, both of parent and preceptor, pronounced to be 'a most impenetrable dunce.'"

BOYISH WIT.

Among Sheridan's schoolfellows were two sons of a physician. One day, the conversation of the playground turned upon the rank and riches of parents. The brothers boasted of their father, saying that he was "a gentleman, professionally attending several of the nobility." "And so is my father, and as good as your father, any day," replied little Sheridan. "Ah! but," said the elder boy, "your father is an *actor*, Dick—a player on the public stage, consequently it is impossible that he can be a gentleman." "You may think so," replied Sheridan, "but I don't; for your father *kills* people, and mine only *amuses* them."

A gentleman, having a remarkably long visage, was one day riding by the school, at the gate of which he overheard young Sheridan say, "That gentleman's face is longer than his life." Struck by the strangeness of the remark, he turned his horse's head, and requested its meaning. "Sir," said the boy, "I meant no offence in the world, but I have read in the Bible at school, that a man's life is but a span, and I am sure your *face* is double that length." The gentleman threw the lad sixpence for his wit.

SHERIDAN AT HARROW.

Mr. and Mrs. Sheridan having gone to reside in England, the boys were removed from Mr. Whyte's school; and in the year 1762 Richard was sent to Harrow, Charles being kept at home, under the tuition of his father.

At Harrow, Mr. Moore tells us, "Richard was remarkable only as a very idle, careless, but at the same time engaging boy, who contrived to win the affection and even admiration of the whole school, both masters and pupils, by the mere charm of his frank and genial manners, and by the occasional gleams of superior intellect, which broke through all the indolence and indifference of his character."

DR. PARR'S ACCOUNT OF SHERIDAN'S SCHOOL-DAYS.

Harrow, at this time, had for its head-master, Dr. Sumner, and one of the under-masters was Dr. Parr; both of whom endeavoured, by every method they could devise, to awaken in Sheridan a consciousness of those powers which it was manifest to them that he possessed. Remonstrance and

encouragement were, however, equally thrown away upon the good-humoured but immovable indifference of their pupil.

Mr. Moore was favoured by Dr. Parr with some interesting particulars of Sheridan's school-days; the substance of which we give, nearly in the Doctor's own words:—

"There was little in his boyhood, (says Dr. Parr,) worth communication. He was inferior to many of his schoolfellows in the ordinary business of a school, and I do not remember any one instance in which he distinguished himself by Latin or English composition, in prose or verse.* Richard Sheridan was at the uppermost part of the fifth form, but he never reached the sixth. He went through his lessons in Horace and Virgil, and Homer, well enough for a time. But in the absence of the upper master, Dr. Sumner, upon calling up Dick Sheridan, I found him not only slovenly in construing, but unusually defective in his Greek grammar. Knowing him to be a clever fellow, I did not fail to probe and to tease him. I stated his case with great good humour to the upper master, who was one of the best tempered men in the world; and it was agreed between us, that Richard should be called oftener and worked more severely. The varlet was not suffered to stand up in his place; but was summoned to take his place near the master's table, where the voice of no prompter could reach him; and in this defenceless condition he was so harassed that he at last gathered up some grammatical rules, and prepared himself for his lessons. While this tormenting process was inflicted upon him, I now and then upbraided him. But you will take notice that he did not incur any corporal punishment for his idleness; his industry was just sufficient to protect him from disgrace. All this while Sumner and I saw in him vestiges of a superior intellect. His eye, his countenance, his general manner, were striking. His answers to any common questions were prompt and acute. We know the esteem, and even admiration, which, somehow or other, all his schoolfellows felt for him. He was mischievous enough, but his pranks were accompanied by a sort of vivacity and cheerfulness which delighted Sumner and myself. I had much trouble with him about his apple-loft, for the supply of which all the gardens in the neighbourhood were taxed, and some of the lower boys were employed to furnish it. I threatened, but without asperity, to trace the depredators, through his associates, up to their leader. He with perfect good humour set me at defiance, and I never could bring home the charge to him. All boys and all masters were pleased with him. I often praised him as a lad of great talents, and often expected him to use them well; but my expectations were fruitless. I take for granted that his taste was silently improved, and that he knew well the little which he did know.

* * * * * * * * *

"I ought to have told you, that Richard, when a boy, was a great reader of English poetry; but his exercises afforded no proof of his proficiency. In truth, he, as a boy, was quite careless of literary fame."

---

* Dr. Parr was not aware that Sheridan did try his hand at English verse before he left Harrow.

In a subsequent letter, Dr. Parr says :—

"I know not whether Tom Sheridan found Richard tractable in the art of speaking, and upon such a subject, indolence or indifference would have been represented by the father as crimes quite inexpiable. In the later periods of his life Richard did not cast behind him classical learning. He spoke copiously and powerfully about Cicero. He had read and he had understood the four orations of Demosthenes read and taught in our public schools. He was at home in Virgil and in Horace. I cannot speak positively about Homer,—but I am very sure that he read the Iliad now and then; *not* as a professed scholar would do, critically, but with all the strong sympathies of a poet reading a poet.

"Let me assure you that Richard, when a boy, was by no means vicious. The sources of his infirmities were a scanty and precarious allowance from the father; the want of a regular plan for some profession; and above all, the act of throwing him upon the town, when he ought to have been pursuing his studies at the University. He would have done little among mathematicians at Cambridge; he would have been a rake, or a trifler, at Dublin;—but I am inclined to think that at Oxford he would have become an excellent scholar."

The Duke of Grafton told Moore (they were dining at Dr. Parr's, in August, 1818,) that he had succeeded Sheridan within a few years, at Harrow, and found his memory preserved very affectionately there, his poems repeated, and a room called after his name. Still, on leaving Harrow, his ignorance is stated to have been so great that he could not spell; and he wrote *think* for *thing*.

He was removed from school too soon by his father, who was compelled by the embarrassment of his affairs to reside, with the remainder of his family, in France; and it was at Blois, in September, 1766, that Mrs. Sheridan died, leaving behind her that best kind of fame which results from a life of usefulness and purity. The elder sister of Sheridan, Mrs. E. Lefanu, describes him as now "handsome, not merely in the eyes of a sister, but generally allowed to be so. His cheeks had the glow of health, his eyes—the finest in the world—the brilliancy of genius, and were soft as a tender and affectionate heart could render them. The same playful fancy, the same sterling and innoxious wit, that was shown afterwards in his writings, cheered and delighted the family circle."

Sheridan was near his eighteenth year, when he left Harrow, and with his brother Charles, received at home (his father having returned from France, and taken a house in London,) private tuition in Latin and mathematics. They also attended the fencing and riding schools of M. Angelo, and received instructions from their father in English grammar and oratory.

FIRST LITERARY ESSAYS.

However inattentive to his studies Sheridan may have been at Harrow, a letter from his schoolfellow, Mr. Halhed, shows that in poetry he had already distinguished himself, and, in conjunction with this same friend Halhed, had translated the seventh Idyl and many of the lesser poems of Theocritus. This literary partnership was resumed after they left Harrow. In 1770, when Halhed was at Oxford, and Sheridan residing with his father at Bath, they corresponded, and began and prosecuted a variety of works together, of which none but their translation of Aristænetus ever saw the light.

This alliance was peculiarly interesting. Their united ages did not amount to thirty-eight. They were both abounding in wit and spirits; both carelessly embarking, without rivalry or reserve, their venture of fame in the same bottom; and both, as Halhed discovered at last, passionately in love with the same woman.

The first joint production of Sheridan and Halhed was a piece, in three acts, burlesquing *Midas;* the amours of Jupiter with *Major* Amphitryon's wife, and *Sir Richard* Ixion's courtship of Juno, who substitutes *Miss Peggy Nubilis* in her place, form the subject of this drama, of which Halhed furnished the burlesque scenes; while the form of a rehearsal, into which the whole is thrown, and which, as an anticipation of *The Critic*, is highly curious, was suggested and managed entirely by Sheridan. Among its drolleries, Ixion, for his presumption, instead of being fixed to a *torturing* wheel, was to have been fixed to a vagrant monotroche, as knife-grinder, and a grand chorus, intermixed with "Knives, scissors, penknives to grind," (set to music as nearly as possible to the natural cry,) was to have concluded the drama. The piece was, however, not completed; but the subject, many years after, came forth as *The Critic*.

The two friends next projected *Hernan's Miscellany*, of which one number only, written by Sheridan, was found among his papers; then he shadowed out a collection of Occasional Poems, and a volume of *Crazy Tales*. In 1771 appeared the first part of their joint translation of Aristænetus; the most interesting portion of which was the Epistle "From a Lover resigning his Mistress to his Friend," in which Halhed directly alludes to his own fate, in paying his devoirs to Miss Linley, in rivalry with Sheridan.

Mr. Grenville thought Sheridan used, when a young fellow, to pick up a guinea or two by writing for newspapers, which is confirmed by the fragments of letters of this kind among his papers. He lived much at a coffee-house in Maiden-lane, Covent Garden: this was Munday's Coffee-house, not the Bedford, as Mr. Moore supposed.

A SERMON, BY SHERIDAN.

The following practical jest is well known, but is thus related by Mr. Moore, who had the advantage of hearing it from the person on whom the joke was inflicted :—

The Rev. Mr. O'B—— (afterwards Bishop of B——) having arrived to dinner at Sheridan's country-house, near Osterley, where, as usual, a gay party was collected (consisting of General Burgoyne, Mrs. Crewe, Tickell, &c.), it was proposed that on the next day (Sunday) the rev. gentleman should, on gaining the consent of the resident clergyman, give a specimen of his talents as a preacher in the village church. On his objecting that he was not provided with a sermon, his host proposed to write one for him; and the offer being accepted, Sheridan left the company early, and did not return for the remainder of the evening. The following morning, Mr. O'B. found the manuscript by his bedside, tied together neatly (as he described it) with riband; the subject of the discourse being the "Abuse of Riches." Having read it over, and corrected some biblical errors (such as "it is easier for a camel," as Moses says, &c.) he delivered the sermon in his most impressive style, much to the delight of his own party, and to the satisfaction, as he unsuspectingly flattered himself, of all the rest of the congregation, among whom was Sheridan's wealthy neighbour, Mr. C——.

Some months afterwards, however, Mr. O'B—— perceived that the family of Mr. C——, with whom he had previously been intimate, treated him with marked coldness; and on his expressing some innocent wonder at the circumstance, was at length informed, to his dismay, by General Burgoyne, that the sermon which Sheridan had written for him was, throughout, a personal attack upon Mr. C——, who had at that time rendered himself very unpopular in the neighbourhood by some harsh conduct to the poor, and to whom every one in the church, except the unconscious preacher, applied almost every sentence of the sermon.

Elsewhere, Mr. Moore notes: "It was at Osterley, where

Child lived, and where Sheridan had a house, that he wrote the sermon for O'Beirne to preach; poor O'Beirne throwing his voice most pointedly into Child's pew. Child had been harsh in punishing some poor person for making free with a few vegetables; and the text (Rogers says, though this differs from O'Beirne's account to me), 'It is easier for a camel,' &c."

MISS LINLEY—SHERIDAN'S COURTSHIP.

About the middle of 1770 the Sheridans took up their residence at Bath, where an acquaintance commenced between them and Mr. Linley's family. The two brothers soon became deeply enamoured of Miss Linley. Richard was not long in winning her entire affections. Halhed had confided to him the love he also bore the lady, who went frequently to Oxford, to perform at the oratorios and concerts. Here the rivals most dreaded were Norris, the singer, and Mr. Watts, a gentleman commoner of very large fortune. It was currently reported that she had gone off to Scotland with a young man of 3,000*l.* a-year; but it proved that neither rank nor wealth had influenced her heart in its election; and Halhed discovered at last that his unpretending friend Sheridan was the chosen favourite. Like that saint, Cecilia, by whose name she was always called, she had long welcomed to her soul a secret visitant in Sheridan, and Halhed, in despair, sailed for India about the end of this year.

"The Young Maid of Bath," as Miss Linley was called, had spread her gentle conquests to an extent almost unparalleled in the annals of beauty, by her personal charms, and the exquisiteness of her musical talents, yet was little more than sixteen when Sheridan first met her. She had been, even at this early age, on the point of marriage with Mr. Long, an old gentleman of considerable fortune in Wiltshire, to whom she secretly represented that she could never be happy as his wife: he then broke off the alliance, and generously settled 3,000*l.* upon the lady.

To this period of Mr. Sheridan's life we are indebted for most of his elegant love verses. The lines "Uncouth is this moss-covered grotto of stone," were addressed to Miss Linley, after a lovers' quarrel; and the grotto is supposed to have been in Spring Gardens, Bath. "Dry be that tear, my gentlest love," was written at a later period of the courtship. The pretty lines, "Mark'd you her cheek of rosy hue?" were

written, not upon Miss Linley, as has been generally stated, but upon Lady Margaret Fordyce, and form part of a poem published 1771, descriptive of the principal beauties of Bath: these are the six favourite lines:—

Mark'd you her cheek of rosy hue?
Mark'd you her eye of sparkling blue?
That eye in liquid circles moving;
That cheek abash'd at man's approving;
The *one*, Love's arrows darting round;
The *other*, blushing at the wound.

We find here, too, the source of one of those familiar lines, which so many quote without knowing whence they come:—

You write with ease to shew your breeding,
But easy writing's curst hard reading.

In the same year, we find Sheridan writing a humorous description of the ridotto at the opening of the New Assembly Rooms at Bath. It was called, "An Epistle from Timothy Screw to his Brother Henry, waiter at Almack's," and first published in the *Bath Chronicle*. Here is a specimen of its humour:—

Two rooms were first opened—the *long* and the *round* one,
(These *Hogstyegon* names only serve to confound one,)
Both splendidly lit with the new chandeliers,
With drops hanging down like the bobs at Peg's ears:
While jewels of *paste* reflected the rays,
And *Bristol-stone* diamonds gave strength to the blaze;
So that it was doubtful to view the bright clusters,
Which sent the most light out, the ear-rings or lustres.

SHERIDAN ELOPES WITH MISS LINLEY—TWO DUELS.

In 1771, Captain Mathews, a married man, and intimate with Mr. Linley's family at Bath, having persecuted Miss Linley with his indiscreet attentions, she confided her distresses to Richard Sheridan, who thereupon expostulated, but in vain, with Mathews, upon the cruelty and fruitlessness of his pursuit. Early in 1772, therefore, Miss Linley, accompanied by Sheridan and a female attendant, left Bath, with the resolution of flying secretly to France, and taking refuge in a convent.* On their arrival in London, Sheridan, with an adroitness, at least, very dramatic, introduced her to an old

* When Moore went to Crutwell's, in 1818, to look over the *Bath Chronicle*, he was amused with seeing Miss Linley's name all at once left out of the concert announcement; and knew by that she was off.

friend of his family as a rich heiress, who had consented to elope with him to the Continent; when the old gentleman commended Sheridan for having given up the imprudent pursuit of Miss Linley, and assisted the fugitives in reaching France, where they were married at a village near Calais, in March, 1772. At Lisle the lady procured an apartment in a convent, intending to remain there till Sheridan could support her as his acknowledged wife. Mr. Linley, however, soon arrived at Lisle in pursuit of her. When Sheridan explained, the father was reconciled, and the whole party set off amicably together for England. Meanwhile, Mr. Mathews had in various ways vilified Sheridan's character, as well as that of his brother,—and a duel ensued. Mathews and Sheridan met with swords in Hyde Park, whence, being disturbed, they adjourned to the Castle Tavern, in Henrietta-street, where the duellists engaged, and Mathews being worsted, begged his life and apologized. A second duel was, however, fought on Kingsdown, near Bath, when both their swords breaking upon the first lunge, they threw each other down, and with the broken pieces hacked at each other, rolling upon the ground, the seconds standing by, quiet spectators: Sheridan was much mangled, Mathews but slightly.*

A report speedily reached the Linleys, who were professionally engaged at Oxford, that Sheridan's life was in danger, when Miss Linley, on her way back to Bath, in the distress of the moment, let the secret of her heart escape, and passionately exclaimed, "My husband! My husband!" demanding to see him, and insisting upon her right as his wife to be near him, and watch over him day and night. Her entreaties, could not, however, be complied with, for the elder Mr. Sheridan, on his return from town, incensed and grieved at the catastrophe to which his son's imprudent passion had led, refused even to see him, and forbade all intercourse between his daughters and the Linley family. As soon as Sheridan was sufficiently recovered of his wounds, his father removed him from Bath, to pass some months at Waltham Abbey, in Essex. Here, in retirement, he was very industrious: he made an abstract of the *History of England* in more than a hundred closely written pages,

* This duel, in after years, Mathews described as a hoax—in fact, no duel at all; adding that Sheridan came drunk, and that he (Mathews) could have killed him with the greatest ease, if he had chosen. Yet, this version of the affair is very doubtful.

besides a collection of remarks on Sir William Temple's works.

The elder Mr. Sheridan now entreated his son to join in a prosecution of Mathews, as an unfair and dishonourable antagonist; Sheridan refused, but this revival of the subject had nearly led to a third duel.

Some severe charges against Sheridan in this affair with Mathews, having appeared in the *Bath Chronicle*, he (S.) called upon Woodfall, the printer of the *Morning Chronicle*, and requested him to insert them, in order that they might gain universal circulation, and that his answer, which he meant soon to prepare, might be understood as universally. Woodfall complied with his request, but the refutation never was written; so that the venom was, by this means, spread, and Sheridan's indolence prevented him from ever supplying the antidote.

In the following Lent, Miss Linley appeared in the oratorios at Covent Garden,* and Sheridan, though prevented by her father from private interviews, frequently came to town from Waltham Abbey, to see her in public. Among many other stratagems which he contrived, for the purpose of exchanging a few words with her, he more than once disguised himself as a hackney-coachman, and drove her home from the theatre. At length, after a series of stratagems and scenes, which convinced Mr. Linley that it was impossible much longer to keep them asunder, he consented to their union. The family having been assured that Miss Linley's avowal of the French marriage was incorrect, they were married by licence, as thus announced in the *Gentleman's Magazine:* "Mr. Sheridan of the Temple, to the celebrated Miss Linley of Bath."

A few days before his marriage, Sheridan entered his name on the books of the Middle Temple; but he never gave one serious hour to the law.

SHERIDAN AFTER MARRIAGE.

Sheridan's main resources were now a part of the sum which Mr. Long had settled upon Miss Linley, and occasional assistance from her father, his own having withdrawn all

* Walpole, in a letter to the Countess of Ossory, March 16, 1773, describes Miss Linley as "the superlative degree," adding, "the King admires her, and ogles her as much as he dare to do in so holy a place as an oratorio, and so devout a service as Alexander's Feast."

countenance from him. The celebrity of Mrs. Sheridan as a singer was a ready source of wealth; but with a pride and delicacy, which received the tribute of Dr. Johnson's praise, Sheridan rejected at once all thoughts of allowing her to reappear in public, and would not even suffer her to keep an engagement which had been made for her to sing at the approaching music-meeting at Worcester. They were now (1773) living in a small cottage at East Burnham,* to which they often looked back with a sigh in after-times, when they were more prosperous but less happy. Towards winter they went to lodge for a short time with Storace, the intimate friend of Linley; and in the following year they settled in a house in Orchard-street, Portman-square, the lady's father having kindly supplied the furniture.

Crowe told Moore that he remembered Miss Linley when there was a degree of sternness mixed with the beauty of her features; like her father, who was ill-tempered looking. Tom resembled her very much.

The charm of her singing, as well as her fondness for children, are thus described in a letter to Mr. Rogers from one of the most tasteful writers of the day: "Hers was truly a voice as of the cherub choir; and she was always ready to sing without any pressing. She sung here a great deal, and to my infinite delight; but what had a peculiar charm was, that she used to take my daughter, then a child, on her lap, and sing a number of childish songs with such a playfulness of manner, and such a sweetness of look and voice, as was quite enchanting."

One of those transient preferences which, in early youth, are mistaken for love, had already taken lively possession of her imagination; and to this the following lines, written at that time by Mr. Sheridan, allude:

TO THE RECORDING ANGEL.

Cherub of Heaven, that from thy secret stand
Dost note the follies of each mortal here,
Oh, if Eliza's steps employ thy hand,
Blot the sad legend with a mortal tear.

* The time thus passed at East Burnham was, of course, long remembered by them both for its happiness. Mr. Moore was told by a friend of Sheridan, that he once overheard him exclaiming to himself, after looking for some moments at his wife, with agony, no doubt, of melancholy self-reproach,—"Could anything bring back those first feelings?" then adding, with a sigh, "Yes, perhaps the cottage at East Burnham might."

Nor, when she errs, through passion's wild extreme,
Mark then her course, nor heed each trifling wrong;
Nor, when her sad attachment is her theme,
Note down the transports of her erring tongue;
But when she sighs for sorrows not her own,
Let that clear sigh to mercy's cause be given;
And bear that tear to her Creator's throne,
Which glistens in the eye uprais'd to Heaven!

MR. AND MRS. SHERIDAN, BY TICKELL.

One of the principal productions of Sheridan's intimate companion, Tickell, was the *Wreath of Fashion*, a poem, which procured him not only fame but a place in the Stamp Office. It possesses some graceful touches of pleasantry, the humour of which has not yet grown stale: Sheridan is the hero of the *Wreath*, which contains a well-merited tribute to Mrs. Sheridan. After a description of the various poets of the day that deposit their offerings in Lady Millar's "Vases of Sentiment," the author proceeds:

At Fashion's shrine behold a gentler bard
Gaze on the mystic vase with fond regard—
But see, Thalia checks the doubtful thought,
"Canst thou (she cries) with sense, with genius fraught,
Canst thou to Fashion's tyranny submit,
Secure in native, independent wit?
Or yield to sentiment's insipid rule,
By Fate, by Fancy, chas'd through Scandal's school!
Ah no—be Sheridan's the comic page,
Or let me fly with Garrick from the stage!
Haste, then, my friend, (for let me boast that name,)
Haste to the opening path of genuine fame;
Or, if thy muse a gentler theme pursue,
Ah! 'tis to love and thy Eliza due!
For, sure, the sweetest lay she well may claim,
Whose soul breathes harmony o'er all her frame;
While wedded love with ray serenely clear,
Beams from her eye, as from its proper sphere.

THE COMEDY OF "THE RIVALS."

Before the close of 1774, Sheridan had not only finished his play of *The Rivals*, but was about to send a book to press: this was an Essay on the *Letters of Lord Chesterfield*, which had just then appeared.

The Rivals was written at the request of Mr. Harris, manager of Covent Garden, who told Sheridan the least shilling he would get by it, if it succeeded, would be 600*l.* He wrote the comedy within two months: it was produced January 17, 1775, with Shuter as Sir Anthony Absolute; Captain Absolute, Mr. Woodward; Falkland, Mr. Lewis; Acres, Mr. Quick; Mrs. Malaprop, Mrs. Green. The comedy failed on its first representation, chiefly from the bad acting of Mr. Lee, as Sir Lucius O'Trigger; Mr. Clinch was substituted in his place, and the play rose at once into public favour. It proved equally successful at Bath and Bristol: at Bath, above a hundred persons were turned away the first night. With much less wit, it exhibits, perhaps, more humour, than the *School for Scandal.* The character of Sir Anthony Absolute is the best sustained and most natural, and the scenes between him and Captain Absolute are richly, genuinely dramatic. Mrs. Malaprop's fame was made by the luckiness of her simile, "as headstrong as an *allegory* on the banks of the Nile." "The Rivals" was said to be Sheridan's own history; and Falkland his own experience in love-making. From its lively plot, variety and whimsicality of character, and the exquisite humour of its dialogue, this play, even without the aid of its more splendid successor, *The School for Scandal,* would have placed Sheridan in the first rank of comic writers.

Rogers preferred Sheridan's *Rivals* to his *School for Scandal:* "exquisite humour (he says) pleases me more than the finest wit."

FIRST MEETING OF FOX AND SHERIDAN.

Lord John Townshend first had the happiness of bringing these two eminent persons together: the date of the letter in which this introduction is described, is not known:

I made the first dinner-party at which they met, having told Fox that all the notions he might have conceived of Sheridan's talents and genius from the comedy of *The Rivals,* &c. would fall infinitely short of the admiration of his astonishing powers, which I was sure he would entertain at the first meeting. The first interview between them (there were very few present, only Tickell, myself, and very few more) I shall never forget. Fox told me, after breaking up from dinner, that he had always thought Hare, after my uncle, Charles Townshend, the wittiest man he ever met with, but that Sheridan surpassed them both infinitely; and Sheridan told me next day, that he was quite lost in admiration of Fox, and that it was a puzzle to him to say what he

admired most, his commanding superiority of talents and universal knowledge, or his playful fancy, artless manners, and benevolence of heart, which showed itself in every word he uttered.

THE DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE.

Among the families visited by Sheridan and his wife was that of Mr. Coote (Purden), at whose musical parties Mrs. Sheridan frequently sung, accompanied occasionally by the two little daughters of Mr. Coote, who were the originals of the children introduced into Sir Joshua Reynolds's portrait of Mrs. Sheridan as St. Cecilia.

It was here that the Duchess of Devonshire first met Sheridan; and long hesitated as to the propriety of inviting to her house two persons of such equivocal rank in society, as he and his wife were at that time considered. Her Grace was reminded of these scruples some years after, when "the player's son" had become the admiration of the proudest and the fairest; and when a house provided for the Duchess herself at Bath, was left two months unoccupied, in consequence of the social attractions of Sheridan, which prevented a party then assembled at Chatsworth from separating. "These," says Mr. Moore, "are triumphs which, for the sake of all humbly-born heirs of genius, deserve to be commemorated."

Sheridan used to relate of the beautiful Duchess of Devonshire, that she indulged in gaming, and was made miserable by her debts. A faro-table was kept by one Martindale, at which her Grace and other high fashionables used to play. The Duchess and Martindale had agreed that whatever they two won from each other should be sometimes *double*, sometimes *treble*, the sum which it was called; and Sheridan assured Mr. Rogers that he had handed the Duchess into her carriage when she was literally sobbing at her losses,—she perhaps having lost 1500*l.*, when it was supposed to be only 500*l.* The Duchess was dreadfully hurt at the novel of *A Winter in London*, which contained various anecdotes concerning her. "Never read that book, for it has helped to kill me," were her words to a very near relative. Her Grace figures in the novel under the name of the Duchess of Belgrave: it was written by T. S. Surr, who, we happen to know, was one of the kindest-hearted men living, and had no idea of wounding the Duchess' feelings by his book, and was himself astounded at its great temporary success.

SHERIDAN AND DR. JOHNSON.

In 1775, notwithstanding the great success of his first attempts in the drama, Sheridan took to politics, and commenced writing a reply to Dr. Johnson's pamphlet on the American question, entitled *Taxation no Tyranny*. Johnson's genius was one of the points upon which Sheridan intended to assail him, and among his stray hints we find:—"It is hard when a learned man thinks himself obliged to commence politician. Such pamphlets will be as trifling and insincere as the venal quit-rent of a birthday ode." Dr. Johnson's other works, his learning and infirmities, fully entitled him to such a mark of distinction. There was no call on him to become politician. The easy quit-rent of panegyric, and a few grateful rhymes or flowery dedications to the immediate benefactor, &c.

* * * * * *

The man of letters is rarely drawn from obscurity by the inquisitive eye of a sovereign; it is enough for royalty to gild the laurelled brow, not explore the garret or the cellar. In this case the return will generally be ungrateful, the patron is most possibly disgraced or in opposition—if he (the author) follows the dictates of gratitude, he must speak his patron's language, but he may lose his pension; but to be a standing supporter of a ministry, is probably to take advantage of that competence against his benefactor. When it happens that there is great experience and political knowledge, this is more excusable; but it is truly unfortunate where the fame of far different abilities adds weight to the attempts of rashness."

* * * * * *

He then adds this very striking remark, "Men seldom think deeply on subjects on which they have no choice of opinion: they are fearful of encountering obstacles to their faith (as in religion), and so are content with the surface."

Dr. Johnson says, in one part of his pamphlet,—"As all men are born the subjects of some state or other, we may be said to have been all born consenting to some system of government." On this Sheridan remarks:—"This is the most slavish doctrine that ever was inculcated. If by our birth we gave a tacit bond for our acquiescence in that form of government under which we were born, there never would have been an alteration in the first modes of government; no revolution in England."

It is not to be regretted that this pamphlet was left unfinished. Its publication would probably have precluded its author from the distinction and pleasure which he afterwards enjoyed in the society and conversation of Dr. Johnson, who, in the following year, proposed him as a member of the Literary Club, and always spoke of his character and genius with praise. Nor was Sheridan wanting on his part with corresponding tributes; for in a prologue which he wrote about this time to the play of *Sir Thomas Overbury*, he thus alludes to Johnson's life of its unfortunate author :—

> "So pleads the tale, and gives to future times
> The son's misfortune, and the parent's crimes;
> There shall his fame, if own'd to-night, survive,
> Fix'd by the hand that bids our language live.

SHERIDAN PURCHASES DRURY-LANE THEATRE.

Towards the close of 1775, Sheridan opened a negotiation with Garrick for the purchase of his moiety of the patent of Drury-lane Theatre. In his letter to Linley, "the whole is valued at 70,000*l.*" Garrick appears to be "very shy of letting his books be looked into," &c. Sheridan is sanguine; he says, "I think we might *safely* give 3,000*l.* more on this purchase than richer people. The whole valued at 70,000*l.*, the annual interest is 3,500*l.*; while this is *cleared*, the proprietors are *safe*, but I think it must be *infernal* management indeed that does not double it." * Subsequently, showed Sheridan an estimate of the profits to have exceeded ten per cent.

Eventually, the purchase of Garrick's moiety was completed as follows :—Mr. Sheridan, two-fourteenths, 10,000*l.*; Mr. Linley, ditto, 10,000*l.*; Dr. Ford, three ditto, 15,000*l.* Now, although the letters in Mr. Moore's work furnish a more detailed account than had yet been given to the public of this transaction, by which Mr. Sheridan became possessed of his theatrical property, they still leave us in the dark with respect to the source from which his own means of completing the purchase were derived. Not even to Mr. Linley does he hint as the fountain-head from which this supply is to come. His financial resources had an air of magic about them; and the mode by which he conjured up at this time,

* These accounts were found among Mr. Sheridan's papers. Garrick's income from the theatre for the year 1775-6 is thus stated :—author, 400*l.*; salary, 800*l.*; manager, 500*l.*

the money for his purchase into the theatre, says Moore, remains, as far as I can learn, still a mystery.

This perplexity has received a criticism which, probably, the author little expected. Charles Mathews the elder said, it was "very simple in Tom Moore to admire (or rather wonder) how Sheridan came by the means of paying the price of Drury-lane Theatre, when all the world knows that he never paid it at all; and that Lacy, who sold it, was reduced to want by his breach of faith."—*Lockhart's Life of Sir Walter Scott.*

"THE DUENNA."

In the summer of 1775, Sheridan was employed in writing the opera of the *Duenna;* and his father-in-law, Mr. Linley, assisted in selecting and composing the music for it. We find, in Moore's *Life*, some interesting letters, detailing the joint progress of the work. Sheridan, writing to Linley in Bath, says: "I'd have you to know that we are much too chaste in London to admit such strains as your Bath spring inspires. We dare not propose a peep beyond the ancle on any account; for the *critics in the pit* at a new play are much greater prudes than the ladies in the boxes." "Harris is extravagantly sanguine of its success as to plot, dialogue, &c." "A rehearsal of the music is arranged in Orchard-street;" and appended to this letter is written, in Mrs. Sheridan's handwriting: "Dearest father, I shall have no spirits or hopes of the opera, unless we see you.—Eliza Ann Sheridan." Mr. Linley consents to come up to the rehearsal, and Mr. Moore tells us that "in the instructions given by the poet to the musicians, we may perceive that he somewhat apprehended, even in the tasteful hands of Mr. Linley, that predominance of harmony over melody, and of noise over both which is so fatal to poetry and song, in their perilous alliance with an orchestra."

On November 24, 1775, the *Duenna* was performed at Covent Garden. Its run became unparalleled. Sixty-three nights was the career of the *Beggar's Opera*, but the *Duenna* was acted no less than seventy-five times during the season, the only intermissions being a few days at Christmas, and the Fridays in every week; the latter on account of Lewin (Don Carlos), who, being a Jew, could not act on those nights.

To counteract this great success of the rival house, Garrick had recourse to the expedient of playing off the mother

against the son, by reviving Mrs. Frances Sheridan's comedy of *The Discovery*, and acting the principal part in it himself. In allusion to the increased fatigue which this competition with the *Duenna* brought upon Garrick, who was then entering upon his sixtieth year, it was said by an actor of the day, that "the old woman would be the death of the old man."

The *Duenna* is one of the very few operas in our language which combines the merits of legitimate comedy with the attractions of poetry and song. The intrigue of the piece is mainly founded upon an incident borrowed from the *Country Wife* of Wycherley. The wit of the dialogue lies near the surface; the songs are full of beauty, and some of them rank among the best models of lyric writing. The verses, "Had I a heart for falsehood framed," are not unworthy of living in recollection with the matchless air to which they are adapted. Mr. Moore considers the following song, for deep, impassioned feeling, and natural eloquence, to be perhaps unrivalled through the whole range of lyric poetry:

Ah, cruel maid, how hast thou chang'd
The temper of my mind!
My heart, by thee from love estrang'd,
Becomes, like thee, unkind.

By fortune favour'd, clear in fame,
I once ambitious was,
And friends I had who fann'd the flame,
And gave my youth applause.

But now my weakness all accuse,
Yet vain their taunts on me;
Friends, fortune, fame itself I'd lose,
To gain one smile from thee.

And only thou shouldst not despise
My weakness or my woe;
If I am mad in others' eyes,
'Tis thou hast made me so.

But days like this, with doubting curst,
I will not long endure—
Am I disdain'd—I know the worst,
And likewise know my cure.

If false, her vows she dare renounce,
That instant ends my pain;
For oh! the heart must break at once,
That cannot hate again.

It is impossible (adds Mr. Moore), to believe that such verses as these had no deeper inspiration than the imaginary loves of an opera. They bear, burnt into every line, the marks of personal feeling, and must have been thrown off in one of those passionate moods of the

heart with which the poet's own youthful love had made him acquainted, and under the impression or vivid recollection of which these lines were written.

Among literary piracies or impostures there are few more audacious than the Dublin edition of the *Duenna*, in which, though the songs are given accurately, an entirely new dialogue is substituted for that of Sheridan, and his gold exchanged for the copper contributions of the editor.

Ormsby, Sheridan's friend, sent him a silver branch on the score of the *Duenna*; and on trying to jingle a little in return, he says, "I believe I must melt it into a bowl to make verses on it, for there is no possibility of bringing candle, candlestick, or snuffers into metre."

Sheridan agreed for the music of the *Duenna* with a music-seller at 30*l.* for every three successive nights, and made a good deal of money by it.

A few interesting circumstances are related of the production of this beautiful work. The last rehearsal but one was just over, when Sheridan said to Linley, "Sir, I admire all your music, except the Friars' Glee, 'This bottle's the sun of our table.' I can't sing; but if I could, it would not be such a tune as yours, under the circumstances in which those reverend and good-living fathers are placed."—"My dear friend," said Linley, "why did you not mention your objection before! It is now too late for alteration. The opera comes on to-morrow night."—"Not too late at all," replied Sheridan. "Imbibe a little inspiration from a flask of your best Burgundy, and the task will be done."—In walking home from the theatre, a new air struck the composer; he reduced it to score on his return, sent the parts early to the singers, and in the morning it was tried, at the last rehearsal, with the new arrangement. Sheridan heard it with evident pleasure. "My dear Sir," said he, "that is the very tune I had in my mind when I wrote the words; but, unfortunately, my musical education was too meagre to allow of my reducing it to crotchets and quavers. Be assured, Sir, *it will grind*"—meaning that it would be so popular as to get into the barrel-organs in the streets. And his prediction was verified: it was encored at night, and soon heard in every corner of London.

Hazlitt calls *The Duenna* a perfect work of art: the songs are the best that ever were written, except those in the *Beggar's Opera*. They have a joyous strain of intoxication in

them, and touches of the most melting tenderness." The dialogue is witty, terse, and polished. "Sheridan's table songs," observes Leigh Hunt, "are always admirable. When he was drinking wine, he was thoroughly in earnest." What can be more real and life-like than the charming song of "Here's to the maiden of bashful fifteen," in the after-dinner scene in the *School for Scandal;* although Linley's air, to which it is set, has been rarely well sung since Braham's day?

"THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL."

Mr. Sheridan was now approaching the summit of his dramatic fame. He had already produced the best opera in the language; and he now crowned his reputation by writing also the best comedy—and that at the age of six-and-twenty. This comedy, from the period of life at which it was written, as well as from the habits of the author, was supposed to have been the rapid offspring of a careless but vigorous fancy; but Mr. Moore shows it to have been, on the contrary, the slow result of many and doubtful experiments, gradually unfolding beauties unforeseen even by him who produced them, and arriving, at length, step by step, at perfection. That such was the tardy process by which the *School for Scandal* was produced, Mr. Moore proves from the first sketches of its plan and dialogue, which he lays before his readers. To satirise some of the Bath gossips appears to have been Sheridan's original intention: his changes are almost interminable; in the rough draft much of the language is spiritless, and we find him cancelling "the antiquated expedient of *dropping the letter.*" The present Charles Surface was at first Clermont, then Florival, then Captain Henry Plausible, then Harry Pliant or Pliable, then Young Harrier, and then Frank; while his elder brother was successively Plausible, Pliable, Young Pliant, Tom, and, lastly, Joseph Surface. The piece, as first constructed, consisted solely of the quarrels of Old Teazle and his wife, the attachment between Maria and one of the Plausibles, and the intrigue of Mrs. Teazle with the other. Mr. Moore says: "The greater part of the dialogue is evidently *experimental,* and the play of repartee protracted with no other view than to take the chance of a trump of wit or humour turning up." Sir Peter is refined into a gentleman, without weakening the ridicule of his situation; and Lady Teazle is changed from an ill-bred young shrew to a lively and innocent, though imprudent, country girl, but with still

enough of the purity of rural life about her heart to keep the blight of the world from settling upon it permanently. There was a want of delicacy in the scene between Lady Teazle and Surface (Act iv. sc. 3, in the present form), the chastening down of which to its present tone is not the least of those triumphs of taste and skill which every step in the elaboration of this fine comedy exhibits, though the original material is still preserved throughout. In respect of mere style, the workmanship of so pure a writer of English as Sheridan is shown in the difficult art of combining ease with polish, and being at the same time idiomatic and elegant. His chief objects in correcting were to condense and simplify, and to get rid of all unnecessary phrases and epithets, the wit gaining in lightness and effect by the change. The quaintness or contrast of his epithets is admirable: so are some of the rejected scraps of dialogue, as "She is one of those who convey a libel in a frown, and wink a reputation down;" and when Sir Peter describes the rustic dress of Lady Teazle before he married her: "You forget when a little wire of gauze, with a few beads, made you a fly-cap, not much bigger than a blue-bottle."

Nevertheless, the first representation of the piece was announced before the whole of the copy was in the hands of the actors. The manuscript, indeed, of the last five scenes shows haste in finishing, there being but one draft of them, scribbled upon detached pieces of paper; while of all the preceding acts there are numerous transcripts, with countless interlineations and memorandums. On the last leaf of all, which exists just as he sent it to the copyist, is written hastily, in the handwriting of the respective parties, at the bottom: "Finished at last, thank God! R. B. Sheridan." "Amen. W. Hopkins."

The play was produced May 8, 1777. Its success, for two years, "damped the new pieces;" and through the third and fourth year, the receipts at its representation always rivalled those on the nights when the king went to the theatre. Garrick attended the rehearsals, and "was never known on any former occasion to be more anxious for a favourite piece. He was proud of the new manager, and in a triumphant tone boasted of the genius to whom he had consigned the conduct of the theatre." Then we have high notes: "Mr. Garrick's best wishes and compliments to Mr. Sheridan. How is the Saint to-day? A gentleman who is mad as myself about

the School, &c. . . . All praise at Lord Lucan's last night." The amalgamation of the two distinct plots, out of which the piece was formed, is a defect. The dialogue has been thought overloaded with wit; and it is curious to see in the manuscript, how the outstanding jokes are kept in recollection upon the margin, until they can be brought into the text. Hence, the dialogue, from begining to end, is a continued sparkling of polish and point, and all the *dramatis personæ* are wits. "In short," says Moore, "the entire comedy is a sort of El Dorado of wit, where the precious metal is thrown about by all classes, as carelessly as if they had not the least idea of its value."

The excrescence of the "Scandalous College" is a blemish; and Mr. Moore was told by a friend, who was in the pit on the first night of performance, that a person who sat near him said impatiently, during the famous scene at Lady Sneerwell's, in the second act, "I wish those people would have done talking, and let the play begin."

The incident of the screen has been considered as beneath the dignity of comedy. To place the screen before the window to keep off the anxious looks opposite, and afterwards to place Lady Teazle between the screen and the window, may be an oversight. Charles's irregularities are lax morality, and the merits of being in debt are made too seductive; though of this class of joke playgoers are proverbially fond. It was playfully said that no tradesman who applauded Charles could possibly have the face to dun the author afterwards. Elsewhere, moral satire is not spared: "Mrs. Candour" has passed into a byeword to put folly and ill-nature out of countenance. Nor is Joseph, "the Tartuffe of sentiment," spared.

With respect to borrowings, it is averred that Charles and Joseph were suggested by Blifil and Tom Jones; Sir Oliver's arrival from India, from the return of Warner in *Sidney Biddulph;* and the scandal scene at Lady Sneerwell's, from Molière; but this is doubtful.

It is singular that during the life of Mr. Sheridan, no authorized or correct edition of this play should have been published in England; the author having kept back the manuscript for nineteen years, endeavouring to satisfy himself with the style of the *School for Scandal,* but not having succeeded.* There is one edition, printed in Dublin, for which

* In 1824, the only printed copy of the *School for Scandal* we could find in London, was in Sheridan's Collected Works, in 8vo.

Sheridan's eldest sister, Mrs. Lefanu, received a hundred guineas, and free admissions for her family. The *School for Scandal* has been translated into most of the languages of Europe, and among the French has undergone a variety of metamorphoses.

At one of the early performances, at Drury Lane, in one of the stage-boxes, sat the fretful critic, Cumberland, who, amidst the general laughter, was observed not once to smile. When the comedy was concluded, he incautiously remarked to a friend, "I am much surprised that the audience should laugh so immoderately at what could not make me smile." This was told to Sheridan, who coolly observed that Cumberland was truly ungrateful for not smiling at his *comedy*, as he had seen a *tragedy* of Cumberland's, at Covent Garden theatre, not a fortnight before, and had laughed from the beginning to the end.

Johnstone told Moore that Sheridan one night came to Drury-lane tipsy, when the *School for Scandal* was acting, went into the Green-room when it was over, and asked what play it was. Wroughton gravely told him. "And who was it," he said, "that acted the old fellow, Sir Peter—what-d'-ye-call-'im?" "Matthews, sir." "Never let him play again; he looks like an old pastrycook." "I am sorry, Mr. Sheridan (said Wroughton), to say that we seldom see you here, and you never come but to find fault." Wroughton was always sturdy with him.

Sheridan told Lord Byron that, on the night of the grand success of his *School for Scandal*, he was knocked down, and put into the watch-house, for making a row in the street, and being found intoxicated by the watchmen.

Rogers mentioned to Moore that Sheridan's father said, "Talk of the merit of Dick's comedy! There's nothing in it. He had but to dip the pencil in his own heart, and he'd find there the characters of both Joseph and Charles."

Mr. Rogers has also the following note upon this play. "Did ever poet, or dramatist, or novel writer, devise a more effective incident than the falling of the rug? (in Molly Seagrim's bed-room, in Fielding's *Tom Jones*,) can anything be more happily ludicrous, when we consider how the actors in that scene are connected with each other? It probably suggested to Sheridan the falling of the screen in the *School for Scandal*." Upon this Mr. Dyce remarks: "No doubt it did; as the James and Blifil of the same novel suggested to

him Charles and Joseph Surface." The incident of Sir Oliver's presenting himself to his relations in disguise is manifestly taken by Sheridan from his mother's novel, *Sidney Biddulph*, which he used to declare he had never read.

Mr. Moore has printed several other memoranda, besides those of the *School for Scandal*, which prove how painfully Sheridan elaborated his compositions. This is hardly fair; for (says Mr. Rogers) though the judicious few will feel that Sheridan was quite right in doing so, the public generally will think the less of him for it. No wonder that these memoranda were extant: Sheridan was in the habit of putting by, not only all papers written by himself, but all others that came into his hands. Ogle told Mr. Rogers, that after his death, he found in his desk sundry unopened letters written by his (Ogle's) mother, who had sent them to Sheridan to be franked! *

In 1837, only two of the original representatives of the characters in Sheridan's chef-d'œuvres survived. These were the Widow of John Philip Kemble,† then Miss Hopkins, who first played Maria, in the *School for Scandal*; and Jack Bannister, then in his 76th year, and who originally played Don Ferolo Whiskerandos in the *Critic*.‡

* Sheridan told Sir Richard Phillips, that when he was about to leave town for Polesden, he tumbled a heap of unopened letters into a bag, which was put into the carriage, that he might read them on the road. He complained bitterly of the innumerable stupid jokes and stories which he was most unwarrantably made to tell in print.

† In 1791, John Kemble played Charles Surface. Some time afterwards, Reynolds and Kemble met at a dinner, when the flattering host asserted that Charles Surface had been lost to the stage since the days of Smith, and added that Kemble's performance of the part should be considered as *Charles's Restoration*. On this a less complimentary guest observed in an undertone, that it should rather be considered as *Charles's Martyrdom*. Kemble overheard the remark, and said with much good humour, that some few months ago, having quarrelled with a gentleman in the street, found himself to be in error, apologised next morning, and offered to make any reasonable reparation. "Sir," replied the gentleman, "at once I meet your proposal, and name one —promise me never to play Charles Surface again, and I shall be perfectly satisfied." Mr. Kemble gave the promise and kept it; for though Sheridan was pleased to say he liked him in the part—Kemble certainly did not like himself.

‡ Whilst this sheet was in the hands of the printers, there passed from among us, September 25, 1861, the best representative of Sir Peter Teazle in our time—Mr. William Farren, who first appeared before a London audience in that character, September 10, 1818, which Moore thus notes: "Went to Covent Garden in the evening:

A WOMAN OF FASHION IN 1777.

In Mr. Sheridan's handwriting were found the following verses, as the foundation of the specimen Sir Benjamin Backbite gives of his talents, in the *School for Scandal.* Mr. Moore thinks they were written by Tickell and Sheridan, to ridicule some women of fashion; but as they are in Sheridan's handwriting, is it not more reasonable to conclude they were wholly, or in greater part, by Sheridan?

Then, behind, all my hair is done up in a plait,
And so, like a cornet's, tuck'd under my hat.
Then I mount on my palfrey as gay as a lark,
And, follow'd by John, take the dust in Hyde Park.
In the way I am met by some smart macaroni,
Who rides by my side on a little bay pony—
No sturdy Hibernian, with shoulders so wide,
But as taper and slim as the ponies they ride;
Their legs are so thin, and their shoulders no wider,
Dear sweet little creatures, both pony and rider!
But sometimes, when hotter, I order my chaise,
And manage myself my two little grays,
Sure never were seen two such sweet little ponies,
Other horses are clowns, and these macaronies,
And to give them this title, I'm sure isn't wrong,
Their legs are so thin, and their tails are so long.
In Kensington gardens to stroll up and down,
You know was the fashion before you left town;
The thing's well enough, when allowance is made
For the size of the trees, and the depth of the shade,
But the spread of their leaves such a shelter affords
To those noisy impertinent creatures call'd birds,
Whose ridiculous chirruping ruins the scene,
Brings the country before me, and gives me the spleen.
Yet tho' 'tis too rural—to come near the mark,
We all herd in *one* walk, and that nearest the Park;
There with ease we may see, as we pass by the wicket,
The chimneys of Knightsbridge—and footmen at cricket;
I must, tho', in justice, declare that the grass,
Which, worn by our feet, is diminish'd apace,
In little more time will be brown and as flat
As the sand at Vauxhall, or as Ranelagh mat.
Improving thus fast, perhaps, by degrees,
We may see rolls and butter spread under the trees,
With a small pretty band in each seat of the walk
To play little tunes, and enliven our walk.

School for Scandal and *Tom Thumb.* The first appearance of Farren from Dublin, an excellent actor."—*Diary,* vol. ii. Of all the *cast* of the *School for Scandal,* on this evening, the Maria, Miss Foote, (Dowager Countess of Harrington) is the sole survivor.

MONODY TO GARRICK.

Early in 1779, Garrick died, and Sheridan, as chief mourner, followed him to the grave. He also wrote a Monody to his memory. During the interment of Garrick in Poets' Corner, Mr. Burke had remarked that the statue of Shakspeare seemed to point to the grave where the great actor of his works was laid. This hint did not fall idly on the ear of Sheridan, as the following *fixation* of the thought in the verses which he afterwards wrote, proves:—

> The throng that mourn as their dead favourite pass'd,
> The grand respect that claimed him to the last;
> While Shakspeare's image, from its hallow'd base,
> Seem'd to prescribe the grave, and point the place.

"THE CRITIC."

In the course of the year 1779, Sheridan produced the entertainment of *The Critic,* somewhat upon the plan of the Duke of Buckingham's *Rehearsal;* except that in the latter, Bayes is a caricature, made up of little more than personal peculiarities; whereas, in the *Critic,* vitality is given to this form of dramatic humour, and even its satirical portraits, as in the instance of Sir Fretful Plagiary, which, it is well known, was designed for Cumberland, are invested with a generic character, which, without weakening the particular resemblance, makes them representatives for ever of the whole class to which the original belonged. In Fielding, too, we find numerous hints or germs, that have come to their full growth of wit in the *Critic.* Another coincidence is of a different kind. "Steal (says Sir Fretful,) to be sure they may; and egad, serve your best thoughts as gipsies do stolen children, disfigure them to make 'em pass for their own." * Churchill has the same idea in nearly the same language:

> "Still pilfers wretched plans, and makes them worse,
> Like gipsies, lest the brat be known,
> Defacing first, then claiming for their own."

The character of Puff was Sheridan's first dramatic attempt which he left unfinished.

* This simile was again made use of by Sheridan in a speech upon Mr. Pitt's India Bill, which he declared to be "nothing more than a bad plagiarism on Mr. Fox's; disfigured, indeed, as gipsies do stolen children, in order to make them pass for their own."

Walpole, in a letter to Mason, Dec. 11, 1779, says: "I have read Sheridan's *Critic*, but not having seen it, for they say it is admirably acted, it appeared wondrously flat and old, and a poor imitation." But Horace Walpole was a poor and untrustworthy critic.

Mr. Leigh Hunt, a far better hand, describes *The Critic* "in some of its most admired passages as little better than an exquisite cento of the wit of the satirists before" the the author: (this is not saying too much for it.) Sheridan must have felt himself emphatically at home in a production of this kind: for there was every call in it upon the powers he abounded in—wit, banter, and style; and none upon his good nature."

The *Critic* retains possession of our stage, and is not unfrequently played. Its practical wit and humour have been borrowed and parodied by many a writer of burlesque, which having become more popular within the last thirty years, has led to the *Critic* itself being received in a more appreciative spirit by the audiences of the present day than hitherto, save on its first production. It is now as fully enjoyed by boxes, pit, and gallery, as is the broadest farce of the day.

LORD BURLEIGH IN "THE CRITIC."

A NEW READING.

The unbroken silence of Lord Burleigh once led to a remarkable blunder in the performance of the character. It appears that at the first performance of this matchless piece, too good to be called a farce, Sheridan had adopted, as the representative of Lord Burleigh, an actor whose "looks profound" accorded with his ignorance, but who until then only aspired to play the livery-servant, and in this humble walk of histrionic art, generally contrived to commit some blunder. Sheridan was remonstrated with on his choice by one of the leading performers, who enlarged upon the excessive dulness of apprehension of the *would-be Minister of State*, and his singular aptitude to error, however simple the part he had to enact, or clear and concise the instructions with which it might be accompanied. As Sheridan had planned the character, the face was everything, and the lengthened, dull, and inexpressive visage of the subject was too *strictly ministerial* to be lost; and the author would, as he said, "defy him to go wrong." Still his friend was sceptical; nor were his doubts removed by Sheridan's assuring

him that the representative of Lord Burleigh "would have only to look wise, shake his head, and hold his tongue"; and he so far persisted as to lay a bet with the author that some capital blunder would, nevertheless, occur. The wager was accepted, and in the fulness of his confidence, Sheridan insisted that the actor should not even rehearse the part, and yet he should get through it satisfactorily to the public and himself on the night of the first performance. It came. Burleigh appeared in all "the bearded majesty" of the age of Elizabeth; and flattered by the preference of the great author, had carefully conned over the following instructions:—"Mr. —— as Lord Burleigh, will advance from the prompter's side;—proceed to the front of the stage;—fall back to where Mr. G. stands as Sir Christopher Hatton—shake his head, and exit." The important moment came. With "stately step and slow," Lord Burleigh advanced in face of the audience. "Capital," exclaimed the gratified author;—with equal correctness he retreated to the side of Sir Christopher, without literally falling back, which Sheridan had for a moment doubted might be the case. "Good; a lucky escape, though," half faltered the anxious dramatist. "Now! Now!" he continued, with eager delight at having got so far so well; but what was his horror when his unlucky pupil, instead of shaking his *own* blundering head, in strict but unfortunate interpretation of his orders, took *that* of Sir Christopher within his hands, shook it long and manfully, and then walked off with a look of exultation at having so exactly complied with his lesson.

THE BLUE-STOCKING.

In the same year (1779), Sheridan wrote for Mrs. Hannah More's tragedy of *Fatal Falsehood* a lively epilogue, in which is the following description of a blue-stocking lady, in that dense epigrammatic style in which every line is a cartridge of wit in itself:—

> What motley cares Corilla's mind perplex,
> Whom maids and metaphors conspire to vex!
> In studious dishabille behold her sit,
> A letter'd gossip, and a housewife wit:
> At once invoking, though for different views,
> Her gods, her cook, her milliner and muse.
> Round her strew'd room a frippery chaos lies,
> A checker'd wreck of notable and wise,

Bills, books, caps, couplets, combs, a varied mass
Oppress the toilet, and obscure the glass;
Unfinish'd here an epigram is laid,
And there a mantua-maker's bill unpaid.
There newborn plays foretaste the town's applause,
There dormant patterns pine for future gauze.
A moral essay now is all her care,
A satire next, and then a bill of fare;
A scene she now rejects, and now a dish,
Here Act the First, and here "Remove the Fish."
Now while this eye in a fine frenzy rolls,
That soberly casts up a bill for coals;
Black pins and daggers in one leaf she sticks,
And tears, and threads, and bowls, and thimbles mix.

SHERIDAN AND ANNUAL PARLIAMENTS.

Early in 1780, Sheridan first appeared before the public as a political character, in conjunction with Fox and the Westminster Committee, whose professed objects were Annual Parliaments and Universal Suffrage. But it may be doubted whether either Sheridan or Fox was a sincere Reformer; and the former alike showed his humour and tact by advising his political friends as follows: "Whenever any one proposes to you a specific plan of Reform, always answer that you are for nothing short of Annual Parliaments and Universal Suffrage; there you are safe." And he delighted to refer to a jest of Burke, who spoke of a new party of Reformers who thought Annual Parliaments not frequent enough, and borrowing a term from the statute of Edward III., Sheridan used to say, "*I am an Oftener-if-need-be.*" To the last, he professed himself a warm friend to Reform, but his arguments had the air of being ironical and insidious.

At this period, Sheridan seldom obtruded himself upon the House, and never spoke but after careful and even verbal preparation. Like most of our great orators at the commencement of their career, he was in the habit of writing out his speeches before he delivered them; and though subsequently he scribbled these preparatory sketches upon detached sheets, he began by using for this purpose the same sort of copy-books which he had employed in the first rough drafts of his plays.

SHERIDAN, SELWYN, AND BROOKES'S CLUB.

Brookes's Club, from whose windows the members have so long commanded the Campus Martius of St. James's-street,

was originally a gaming-club, and was farmed at first by Almack, but afterwards by Brookes, a wine-merchant and money-lender, described by Tickell, in a copy of verses, addressed to Sheridan, as one who

> Nurs'd in clubs, disdains a vulgar trade,
> Exults to trust, and blushes to be paid.

For Richard Brinsley, Selwyn is said to have conceived an invincible aversion, attributable to their being violently opposed to each other in politics, and to Sheridan having been the member of a party which had deprived Selwyn of a lucrative post. When the former had given his first and high promise of future excellence in politics and wit, Selwyn's antipathy grew fast and furious. One of the first objects meditated by Fox's party, after Sheridan's entrance into the House of Commons, in September, 1780, was to procure, at all events, his election as a member of Brookes's Club. But his success at Stafford met with fewer obstacles than he had to encounter in St. James's-street, where various individuals of that society, impelled either by political or by personal antipathies, were resolute in their determination to exclude him. Among these, two held him in peculiar dislike—George Selwyn and the late Earl of Besborough. Conscious that every exertion would be made to insure Sheridan's success, they agreed not to absent themselves during the time allowed by the regulations of the club for ballots; and as one black ball sufficed to extinguish the hopes of a candidate, they repeatedly prevented his election. In order to remove so serious an impediment, Sheridan's friends had recourse to artifice. Having fixed on the evening when it was resolved to put him up, and finding his two inveterate enemies posted as usual, a chairman was sent with a note, written in the name of Lady Duncannon to her father-in-law, acquainting him that a fire had broke out in his house in Cavendish-square, and entreating him immediately to return home. Unsuspicious of any trick, as his son and daughter-in-law lived under his roof, Lord Besborough, without hesitating an instant, quitted the room, and got into a sedan-chair. Selwyn, who resided in the vicinity of Brookes's, in Cleveland-row, received, nearly at the same time, a verbal message to request his presence, Miss Fagniani (whom he had adopted as his daughter, and who afterwards married the Earl of Yarmouth,) being suddenly seized with an alarming indisposition. This

summons he obeyed; and no sooner was the room cleared, than Sheridan, being proposed a member, a ballot took place, when he was immediately chosen. Lord Besborough and Selwyn returned without delay, on discovering the imposition that had been practised on their credulity, but too late to prevent its effects.

Such is the story told in Selwyn's *Memoirs;* but a different and more popular account is as follows:—

The Prince of Wales joined Brookes's Club to have more frequent intercourse with Mr. Fox, one of the earliest members, and who, on his first acquaintance with Sheridan, became exceedingly anxious for his admission to the club. Sheridan was three times proposed, but as often had one black ball in the ballot, which disqualified him. At length, the hostile ball was traced to George Selwyn, who objected because Sheridan's father had been upon the stage. Sheridan was apprised of this, and desired that his name might be put up again, and that the further conduct of the matter might be left to himself. Accordingly, on the evening when he was to be balloted for, Sheridan arrived at Brookes's, arm-in-arm with the Prince of Wales, just ten minutes before the balloting began. Being shown into the candidates' waiting-room, one of the club waiters was ordered to tell Mr. Selwyn that the Prince desired to speak with him below immediately. Selwyn obeyed the summons, and Sheridan, to whom Selwyn had no personal dislike, entertained him for half an hour with a political story, which interested him very much, but had no foundation in truth. During Selwyn's absence, the balloting went on, and Sheridan was chosen; and the result was announced to himself and the Prince by the waiter, with the preconcerted signal of stroking his chin with his hand. Sheridan immediately rose from his seat, and, apologising for a few minutes' absence, told Selwyn that "the Prince would finish the narrative, the catastrophe of which he would find very remarkable."

Sheridan now went upstairs, was introduced to the club, and was soon in all his glory. The Prince, in the meantime, had not the least idea of being left to conclude a story, the thread of which (if it had a thread), he had entirely forgotten. Still, by means of Selwyn's occasional assistance, the Prince got on pretty well for a few minutes, when a question from the listener as to the flat contradiction of a part of His Royal Highness' story to that of Sheridan, completely posed the

narrator, and he stuck fast. After much floundering, the Prince burst into a loud laugh, saying, "D—n the fellow; to leave me to finish this infernal story, of which I know as much as a child unborn! But never mind, Selwyn, as Sheridan does not seem inclined to come back, let us go upstairs, and I dare say Fox or some of them will be able to tell you all about it." They adjourned to the club-room, and Selwyn now detected the manœuvre. Sheridan then rose, made a low bow, and apologized to Selwyn, through his dropping into such good company, adding, "they have just been making me a member without even one *black ball*, and here I am." "The devil they have!" exclaimed Selwyn. "Facts speak for themselves," replied Sheridan; "and I thank you for your friendly suffrage. And now, if you'll sit down by me, I'll finish my story," &c. "Your story! it's all a lie from beginning to end," exclaimed Selwyn, amidst loud laughter from all parts of the room.

Tickell has grouped some of the most shining persons in that assemblage of wits and statesmen, who gave a lustre to Brookes's Club at this period:

Soon as to Brookes's thence thy footsteps bend,
What gratulations thy approach attend!
See Gibbon rap his box—auspicious sign
That classic compliment and wit combine!
See Beauclerc's cheek a tinge of red surprise,
And friendship gives what cruel health denies.
* * * * * * *
Of wit, of taste, of fancy we'll debate,
If Sheridan, for once, be not too late.

Brookes's was a great betting club; and the principal betters were Fox, Selwyn, and Sheridan. The old betting-book of the club is preserved, and is a great curiosity.

MILITARY AT THE RIOTS OF 1780.

Sheridan's first important speech was a motion which he made in Parliament, 5th of March, 1781, "For the Better Regulation of the Police of Westminster;" his chief object being to expose the unconstitutional exercise of the prerogative that had been assumed, in employing the military to suppress the late riots (1780), without waiting for the authority of the civil power. In the course of his speech he said:

If this doctrine was to be laid down, that the Crown could give orders to the military to interfere, when, where, and for what length of time it please, then we might bid farewell to freedom. If this was

the law, we should then be reduced to a military government of the very worst species, in which we should have all the evils of a despotic state, without the discipline or the security. But we were given to understand, that we had the best protection against this evil, in the virtue, the moderation, and the constitutional principles of the sovereign. No man upon the earth thought with more reverence than himself of the virtues and moderation of the sovereign; but this was a species of liberty which he trusted would never disgrace an English soil. The liberty that rested upon the virtuous inclination of any one man was but suspended despotism; the sword was not indeed upon their necks, but it hung by the small and brittle thread of human will.

PASQUINADES BY TICKELL AND SHERIDAN.

There was a never-ending succession of wit skirmishes and practical jokes between Tickell and Sheridan. The latter were sometimes carried on with all the waggery, and even malice, of schoolboys, of which Mr. Moore relates this droll specimen :—

On one occasion, Sheridan having covered the floor of a dark passage with all the plates and dishes of the house, ranged closely together, provoked his unconscious playfellow, Tickell, to pursue him into the midst of them. Having left a path for his own escape, he passed through easily; but Tickell, falling at full length into the ambuscade, was very much cut by the broken crockery, in several places. The next day, Lord John Townshend, on paying a visit to the bedside of Tickell, found him covered over with patches, and vowing vengeance against Sheridan for this unjustifiable trick. In the midst of his anger, however, he could not help exclaiming, with the true feeling of an amateur of this sort of mischief, "But how amazingly well done it was!"

Tickell had generally some political *jeux d'esprit* in hand, in which he was joined by Sheridan and Lord John Townshend. Mr. Moore has strung together a few of these lampoons; observing, with that play of fancy with which he so often embellishes his biography, "Time having removed their venom, and with it, in a great degree, their wit, they are now, like dried snakes, more harmless objects of curiosity." We select a few:

Johnny W—lks, Johnny W—lks,
Thou greatest of bilks,
How chang'd are the notes you now sing!—
Your fam'd Forty-five
Is prerogative,
And your blasphemy, "God save the King,"
Johnny W—lks,
And your blasphemy, "God save the King."

Joe M—wb—y, Joe M—wb—y,
Your throat sure must raw be,
In striving to make yourself heard;
But it pleas'd not the pigs,
Nor the Westminster Whigs,
That your knighthood should utter one word,
Joe M—wb—y,
That your knighthood should utter one word.

(Sir John Mawbey had been an unsuccessful candidate at the Westminster election.)

Gl—nb—e, Gl—nb—e,
What's good for the scurvy?
For ne'er be your old trade forgot.
In your arms rather quarter
A pestle and mortar,
And your crest be a spruce gallipot,
Gl—nb—e,
Your crest be a spruce gallipot.

Mr. P—l, Mr. P—l,
In return for your zeal,
I am told they have dubb'd you Sir Bob;
Having got wealth enough
By coarse Manchester stuff,
For honours you'll now drive a job,
Mr. P—l,
For honours you'll now drive a job.

(Sir Robert Peel, the first baronet.)

In Sheridan's copy of the stanzas written by him in the above metre at the time of the Union (beginning Zooks, Harry! Zooks, Harry!), he entitles them "An admirable ballad, which goes excellently well to the tune of

Mrs. Arne, Mrs. Arne,
It gives me cons*arn*," &c.

FIRST SPEECH IN PARLIAMENT.

Mr. Sheridan was returned for Stafford in the autumn of 1780, and took his seat on Nov. 20, when a petition was presented to the House, complaining of the undue election of the sitting members (himself and Mr. Monckton), for Stafford. We are told that "he was heard with particular attention, the House being uncommonly still while he was speaking." The indignation which he expressed against the charges brought by the petition against the electors of Stafford was coolly turned into ridicule by Mr. Rigby, Paymaster of

the Forces; when Mr. Fox came promptly to the aid of the young orator, and in reply to Mr. Rigby, observed that "though ministerial members, who chiefly robbed and plundered their constituents, might afterwards affect to despise them, yet gentlemen who felt properly the nature of the trust allotted to them, would always treat them and speak of them with respect."

It was on this night, as Woodfall used to relate, that Mr. Sheridan, after he had spoken, came up to him in the gallery, and asked, with much anxiety, what he thought of the first attempt. The answer of Woodfall, as he had the courage afterwards to own, was, "I am sorry to say, I do not think that this is your line—you had much better have stuck to your former pursuits." On hearing which, Sheridan rested his head upon his hand for a few minutes, and then vehemently exclaimed, "It is in me, however, and, by G—, it shall come out."

It appears, however, that the effect of this first speech disappointed every one. The chief defect remarked in Sheridan was a thick and indistinct mode of delivery, which, though he greatly corrected, was never entirely removed.

Walpole has this caustic note of the speech, Nov. 20, 1780: "On a complaint of a riot at Coventry, which had prevented any election being made there, Sheridan, the comic author, son of the Irish actor, and manager of Drury-lane, who had recently been chosen for Stafford, and was very much attached to Charles Fox, spoke for the first time, but did not make the figure expected."—*Last Journal*, vol. ii. p. 432.

SPEAKING *v.* VOTING.

In the debate upon the charges brought by Mr. Fox against the Admiralty for their mismanagement of the naval affairs in 1781, Sheridan thus happily remarked the two sets of opinions by which the speaking and voting of Mr. Rigby were actuated.

"The right hon. gentleman had acted in this day's debate with perfect consistency. He had assured the House that he thought the noble lord ought to resign his office; and yet he would give his vote for his remaining in it. In the same manner he had long declared, that he thought the American War ought to be abandoned; yet had uniformly given his vote for its continuance. He did not mean, however, to insinuate any motives for such conduct: he believed the right hon. gentleman to have been sincere; he believed, that as a member of parliament, as a privy counsellor, as a private gentleman, he had always detested the American War as much as any man; but that he

had never been able to persuade the Paymaster that it was a bad war; and unfortunately, in whatever character he spoke, it was the Paymaster who always voted in that House. (Rigby was then Paymaster of the Forces.)

SHERIDAN IN OFFICE.

Upon the formation of the Rockingham Ministry, in 1782, Mr. Sheridan shared in the triumph of his party, by being appointed one of the Under Secretaries of State. He spoke, though no report of his speech has been preserved, upon a motion on the State of the Representation, brought forward by the youthful reformer, Mr. William Pitt, whose zeal in the cause of freedom was at that time, perhaps, sincere, and who little dreamed of the war he was destined to wage with it afterwards. Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan spoke strongly in favour of the motion; while, in compliance with the request of the former, Mr. Burke absented himself from the discussion, giving the cause of reform for once a respite from the thunder of his eloquence, like the sleep of Jove in Homer, which leaves the Greeks for the moment masters of the field. Notwithstanding all this, the question was lost by a majority of 161 to 141.

Immediately on his accession to office, Mr. Sheridan received from his brother Charles Francis, who had been called to the Irish bar in 1778 or 9, a letter congratulating him, and imploring him to improve the opportunity to take some substantial advantage for himself, and adding:—

I return you many thanks for Fox's letter. I mean for your intention to make him write one—for as your good intentions always satisfy your conscience, and that you seem to think the carrying of them into execution to be a mere trifling ceremony, as well omitted as not, your friends must always take the *will* for the *deed*. I will forgive you, however, on condition that you will for once in your life consider that though the *will* alone may perfectly satisfy yourself, your friends would be a little more gratified if they were sometimes to see it accompanied by the deed, and let me be the first upon whom you try the experiment.

Sheridan's influence, added to his brother's claims, procured for him the office of Secretary at War in Ireland, a situation which the greater pliancy of his political principles contrived to render a more permanent benefit to him than any that his Whig brother was ever able to secure for himself.

On the death of the Marquis of Rockingham, and Lord Shelburne's acceptance of the Premiership, Mr. Sheridan, with other of Mr. Fox's friends, retired.

TWO IMPROBABILITIES.

When Mr. Moore was writing his *Life of Sheridan*, he had communicated to him an anecdote, worthy in every respect of the most implicit belief, relating to Sheridan's exertions in parliament upon the American question. He is said to have received, towards the close of the war, a letter from one of the leading persons of the American Government, expressing high admiration of his talents and political principles, and informing him that the sum of twenty thousand pounds had been deposited for him in the hands of a certain banker, as a mark of the value which the American people attached to his services in the cause of liberty. To this Mr. Sheridan returned an answer (which, as well as the letter, was seen, it is said, by the person with whom the anecdote originated), full of the most respectful gratitude for the opinion entertained of his services, but begging leave to decline a gift under such circumstances. Upon this Mr. Moore remarks:—"That this would have been the nature of his answer, had any such proposal occurred, the generally high tone of his political conduct forbids us to feel any doubt; but with respect to the credibility of the transaction altogether, it is far less easy to believe that the Americans had so much money to give, than that Mr. Sheridan should have been sufficiently high-minded to refuse it."

PITT'S NEW SINKING FUND.

The plan of paying debt with borrowed money is now pretty generally acknowledged to be a delusion. Though, from the prosperous state of the revenue at the time of the institution of the above fund, the absurdity was not yet committed of borrowing money to maintain it, we may perceive by the following acute pleasantry of Mr. Sheridan, that he already had a keen insight into the fallacy of that plan of redemption afterwards followed:—"At present," he said, "it was clear there was no surplus; and the only means which suggested themselves to him were a loan of a million for the especial purpose, for the right hon. gentleman might say with the person in the comedy, 'If you won't lend me the money, how can I pay you?'"

STAFFORD ELECTION EXPENSES.

After the rout of Sheridan's party, in 1784, he found himself safe in his seat for Stafford once more. Mr. Moore

has printed the following document connected with his election :—

R. B. SHERIDAN, ESQ.—EXPENSES AT THE BOROUGH OF STAFFORD, FOR ELECTION, *Anno* 1784.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
248 Burgesses, paid 5*l.* 5*s.* 0*d.* each				1,302	0	0
Yearly expenses since :—	£	s.	d.			
House-rent and taxes . .	23	6	6			
Servants at 6*s.* per week, board wages	15	12	0			
Ditto, yearly wages . . .	8	8	0			
Coals, &c.	10	0	0			
				57	6	6
Ale tickets	40	0	0			
Half the Members' Plate .	25	0	0			
Swearing young burgesses .	10	0	0			
Subscription to the Infirmary	5	5	0			
Ditto Clergymen's Widows.	2	2	0			
Ringers	4	4	0			
				86	11	0
One year				£143	17	6
Multiplied by years .					6	
					863	5	0
Total expense of six years' parliament, exclusive of expense incurred during the time of election; and your own annual expenses . .					£2,165	5	0

The followers of the Coalition, it should be added, had been defeated in almost all directions, and it was computed that no less than 160 of them had been left upon the field, with no other consolation than what their own wit afforded them, in the title which they bestowed upon themselves, of "Fox's Martyrs."

If we may trust an old anecdote, there were some unpalatable reminders at Stafford. In one of his canvasses, Sheridan was met in the street by one of his old voters, with whom he had formerly some pecuniary dealings. "Well, Maister Sheridan," said the elector, "I be main glad to see you; how be you, eh?" "Why, thank you, my friend, very well; I hope you and your family are very well," replied the candidate. "Ay, ay," answered the elector, "they are pretty nobbling; but they tell me, Maister Sheridan, as how you are trying to get a Parliamentary Reform. Do ye think ye shall get it?" "Why, yes," said Sheridan, "I hope so." "And so do I," replied his constituent, "for then ye'll be able to pay off the old election scores, shan't ye?"

SHERIDAN GIVES AN OFFICIAL DINNER.

Sheridan resided for some years in Bruton-street, Berkeley-square, where his house was so frequently beset with duns or bailiffs, that even the provisions requisite for his family were introduced over the iron railing, down the area. In the course of the year 1786, while living there, he entertained at dinner a number of the Opposition leaders, though he laboured at that time under almost insurmountable pecuniary difficulties. All his plate, as well as his books, were lodged in pawn. Having, nevertheless, procured from the pawnbroker an assurance of the liberation of his silver for the day, he applied to Beckett, the bookseller, of Pall Mall, to fill his empty bookcases. Beckett not only agreed to the proposition, but promised to furnish the vacant shelves with some of the most expensive productions of the British press, provided that two men, expressly sent for the purpose by himself, should be present to superintend their immediate restoration. It was settled finally that these librarians of Beckett's appointment should put on liveries for the occasion, and wait at table. The company, as they assembled, were shown into the library, where, the bookcases being glazed and the doors locked, they had leisure, before dinner was served, to admire the elegance of Sheridan's literary taste, and the magnificence of his collection. But as all machinery is liable to accidents, so, in this instance, a failure had nearly taken place, which must have proved fatal to the entertainment. When it was thought everything was ready for serving the dinner, it happened that, either from the pawnbroker's distrust, or from some unforeseen unlucky delay on his part, the spoons and forks had not yet arrived. Repeated messengers were despatched to hasten them, and they at last made their appearance; but so critically, and so late, that there not being time to clean them, they were thrown into hot water, wiped, and instantly laid on the table. The evening then passed in the most joyous and festive manner. Beckett himself related these circumstances to Sir John Macpherson.—*Sir N. Wraxall's Memoirs.*

A PARLIAMENTARY ATTACK.

When, in 1786, Mr. Pitt brought forward the plan of the Duke of Richmond for the fortification of the Dockyards, Sheridan attacked it with much wit. In speaking of the Report of a Board of General Officers appointed to examine

the plan, the Duke himself being president, Sheridan thus played with the terms of the arm, and fired off his wit *en ricochet*, making it bound lightly from sentence to sentence :—

Yet the noble duke deserved the warmest panegyrics for the striking proofs he had given of his genius as an engineer: which appeared even in the planning and construction of the paper in his hand! The professional ability of the Master-General shone as conspicuously there as it could upon our coasts. He had made it an argument of posts; and conducted his reasoning upon principles of trigonometry, as well as logic. There were certain detached data, like advanced works, to keep the enemy at a distance from the main object in debate. Strong provisions covered the flanks of his assertions. His very queries were in casemates. No impression, therefore, was to be made on this fortress of sophistry by desultory observations; and it was necessary to sit down before it, and assail it by regular approaches. It was fortunate, however, to observe, that notwithstanding all the skill employed by the noble and literary engineer, his mode of defence on paper was open to the same objection which had been urged against his other fortifications; that if his enemy got possession of one of his posts, it became strength against him, and the means of subduing the whole line of his argument.

THE PRINCE OF WALES—THE REGENCY.

After the Prince had refused to countenance the High Tory politics of his time, he attached himself to the leaders of the Whig party—Fox, Sheridan, Burke, &c.—with whom, after he had relinquished his interference in politics, he continued to associate.

The Prince's embarrassments now compelled him to apply to the King for assistance, which was peremptorily refused; and the haughty indifference, both of the monarch and the minister, threw the Prince entirely on the sympathy of the Opposition. In the course of 1786, Mr. Sheridan twice publicly referred to the embarrassments of his Royal Highness; and in the following year Sheridan, in parliament, exerted himself in obtaining relief for the Prince from his debts, and in denying the calumny of his Royal Highness' marriage with Mrs. Fitzherbert.

In the next year, upon the illness of the King, and Mr. Pitt having proposed to Parliament a Regency, the Whig friends of the Prince contended that he had a *right* to be Regent. Meanwhile Mr. Sheridan had proffered his services to the Prince, and he received from the Comptroller of his Royal Highness' household the particulars of the

King's distressing illness. Thus the Comptroller writes to Sheridan :—

The Duke of York, who is looking over me, and is just come out of the King's room, bids me add that His Majesty's situation is every moment becoming worse. His pulse is weaker and weaker; and the doctors say it is impossible to survive it long, if his situation does not take some extraordinary change in a few hours.

Dr. Warren says, if an amendment does not take place in twenty-four hours it is impossible for the King to support it: he adds to me, he will answer for his never living to be declared a lunatic.

The Duke of York, who has been twice in my room in the course of the night, immediately from the King's apartment, says there has not been one moment of lucid interval during the whole night.

* * * * *

The King has been worse these last two days than ever: this morning he made an effort to jump out of the window, and he is now very turbulent and incoherent.

Sheridan had already entered actively into a negociation with Lord Thurlow, to secure his co-operation in consideration of his being allowed to retain the office of Chancellor under the Regency; while Fox had promised to bestow the Great Seal, in the event of a change, upon Lord Loughborough, who, on the other hand, kept a watch on the mysterious movements of Thurlow.* Suddenly, he broke off his negociation with the Prince's party, and declared for the King and Mr. Pitt; it is thought from his having speculated upon the King's recovery.

Mr. Sheridan spoke frequently in the debates on the Regency, but his most important agency was in the less public business connected with it.† He was the confidential adviser of the Prince, directed every step he took, and was the author of most of the correspondence on the subject. The celebrated and masterly letter to Mr. Pitt was said to be the work of Sheridan, but subsequently proved to be the composition of Burke.

The place of Treasurer of the Navy had been allotted to Mr. Sheridan, under the prospective Regency arrangements,

* Lord Thurlow, on one occasion, let his colleagues go to Salthill, and contrived to dine at Windsor. On another occasion, during these manœuvres of the Chancellor at Windsor, he betrayed (to the no small amusement of his colleagues) the secret of an interview which he had just had with the Prince, by coming to the Council with His Royal Highness' hat in his hand, instead of his own.

† Lord Holland told Moore that Sheridan's conduct during the first Regency question, when he had perfect possession of the Prince, was highly fair and honourable.

upon which his friends calculated sanguinely. Sheridan, on the other hand, urged the probability of the King's recovery; and on the very day that Sheridan consented to look at the plan of the apartments he was to occupy in Somerset House, the King was declared convalescent. "He entered his own house at dinner-time with the news. There were present, besides Mrs. Sheridan and his sister, Tickell, who, on the change of administration, was to have been immediately brought into parliament; Joseph Richardson, who was to have had Tickell's place of Commissioner of the Stamp Office; Mr. Reid, and some others. Not one of the company but had cherished expectations from the approaching change,—not one of them, however, had lost so much as Mr. Sheridan. With his wonted equanimity, he announced the sudden turn affairs had taken, and looking round him cheerfully, as he filled a large glass, said,—'Let us all join in drinking His Majesty's speedy recovery.'"

SHERIDAN PREPARING FOR THE "HASTINGS" AFFAIR.

The mind of Sheridan was but scantily informed upon all subjects for which reading is necessary. He had been known to say to his political friends, when invited to take part in some question that depended upon authorities, "You know I'm an ignoramus; but here I am—instruct me, and I'll do my best." It is said that he once, early in his parliamentary career, devoted three months to the hard study of arithmetic, on the chance of, some time or other, being appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Upon the history of Indian affairs he knew little; and among his papers are proofs of the labour which his preparation for the Hastings case cost not only himself but Mrs. Sheridan. For this occasion, the industry of all around him was put in requisition: some busy with the pen and scissors, making extracts; others pasting and stitching his scattered memoranda in their places. Hence almost each of the family contributed to the mechanical construction of the speech: "the pride of its success," says Mr. Moore, "was, of course, equally participated; and Edwards, a favourite servant of Mr. Sheridan, was long celebrated for his professed imitation of the manner in which his master delivered (what seems to have struck Edwards as the finest part of the speech) his closing words, 'My Lords, I have done!'"

Professor Smythe remembered Sheridan going down to Wanstead, to prepare for his reply to the counsel of Hastings. He had two or three days' hard reading, and complained that he had motes before his eyes, with reading so much. Smythe heard his reply: his laceration of Law was powerful. Law had laid himself open by wrongfully accusing Sheridan of showing a wrong paper to Middleton, to entrap him into the answer he wished; whereas it was Lord Camden who made this mistake, and corrected it. Burke addressed Sheridan in the manager's box in a very friendly way, and said he was sorry he meant to conclude in one day: he also went up to him, and thanked him at the conclusion.

CHARGES AGAINST WARREN HASTINGS.

From various combining circumstances, the prosecution of Hastings, in its early stages, excited but a slight and wavering interest; and, without some extraordinary appeal to the sympathies of parliament and the country, it was questionable whether the inquiry would not end abortively.

In this state of the proceedings, Mr. Sheridan brought forward, in the House of Commons, on February 7, 1787, the charge relative to the spoliation of the Begum Princesses of Oude, when it was proposed to impeach the great Indian minister. Sheridan's speech on this occasion occupied five hours and a half in the delivery. Upon its conclusion, Sir William Dolben immediately moved an adjournment of the debate, confessing that in the state of mind in which Mr. Sheridan's speech had left him, it was impossible for him to give a determinate opinion. Mr. Stanhope seconded the motion, and Pitt concurring, the debate was adjourned. The effect of this speech upon its hearers had no parallel in the annals of ancient or modern eloquence. Burke declared it to be "the most astounding effort of eloquence, argument, and wit united of which there was any record or tradition." Fox said of the same speech, "All that he had ever heard, all that he had ever read, when compared with it, dwindled into nothing, and vanished like vapour before the sun." And Pitt acknowledged "that it surpassed all the eloquence of ancient and modern times, and possessed everything that genius or art could furnish to agitate and control the human mind." Of the entire oration, no *verbatim* report exists. Sheridan sat down, not merely amidst cheering, but amidst the loud

clapping of hands, in which the Lords below the bar and the strangers in the gallery joined. The ferment spread fast through the town. Within four-and-twenty hours, Sheridan was offered a thousand pounds for the copyright of the speech, if he would himself correct it for the press. The impression made by this remarkable display of eloquence on severe and experienced critics was deep and permanent. Mr. Windham, twenty years later, said that the speech deserved all its fame, and was, in spite of some faults of taste, such as were seldom wanting either in the literary or in the parliamentary performances of Sheridan, the finest that had been delivered within the memory of man. When the debate was resumed, the tide ran so strongly against Hastings, that his friends were coughed and scraped down. Pitt declared himself for Sheridan's motion, and the question was carried by 175 votes against 68.

Mr. Moore quotes a passage from this speech, which is so strongly marked with the characteristics of Mr. Sheridan's talent, that he considers it as a pretty faithful representation of what he spoke. After adverting to some of those admirers of Mr. Hastings who were not so implicit in their partiality as to give unqualified applause to his crimes, but found an excuse for their atrocity in the greatness of his mind, Mr. Sheridan proceeds:—

He saw nothing great—nothing magnanimous—nothing open—nothing direct—in his measures or in his mind. On the contrary, he had too often pursued the worst objects by the worst means. His course was a natural deviation from rectitude. He either tyrannised or deceived; and was by turns a Dionysius or a Scapin. As well might the writhing obliquity of the serpent be compared to the swift directness of the arrow, as the duplicity of Mr. Hastings's ambition to the simple steadiness of genuine magnanimity. In his mind all was shuffling, ambiguous, dark, insidious, and little: nothing simple, nothing unmixed: all affected plainness and actual dissimulation;—a heterogeneous mass of contradictory qualities; with nothing great but his crimes; and even those contracted by the littleness of his motives, which at once denoted his baseness and his meanness, and marked him for a traitor and a trickster. Nay, in his style and writing there was the same mixture of vicious contrarieties;—the most grovelling ideas were conveyed in the most inflated language, giving mock consequence to low cavils, and uttering quibbles in heroics; so that his compositions disgusted the mind's taste, as much as his actions excited the soul's abhorrence. Indeed, this mixture of character seemed, by some unaccountable but inherent quality, to be appropriated, though in inferior degrees, to everything that concerned his employers. He remembered to have heard an honourable and learned gentleman (Mr. Dundas) remark, that there was something in the first frame and constitution of

the Company, which extended the sordid principles of their origin over all their successive operations; connecting with their civil policy, and even with their boldest achievements, the meanness of a pedlar and the profligacy of pirates. Alike in the political and military line could be observed *auctioneering ambassadors* and *trading generals;*—and thus we saw a revolution brought about by *affidavits;* an army employed in *executing an arrest;* a town besieged on *a note of hand;* a prince dethroned from the *balance of an account.* Thus it was they exhibited a government which united the mock majesty of a bloody sceptre, and the little *traffic of a merchant's counting-house,* wielding a truncheon with one hand, and *picking a pocket with the other.*

Walpole writes to the Countess of Ossory, Feb. 8, 1787, of this speech: "Mr. Sheridan talked for five hours and a half on Wednesday, and turned everybody's head. One heard everybody in the street raving on the wonders of that speech; for my part, I cannot believe it was so supernatural as they say—do you believe it was, Madam? . . . How should such a fellow as Sheridan, who has no diamonds to bestow, fascinate all the world? Yet, witchcraft there no doubt has been; for when did simple eloquence ever convince a majority?"

Lord Brougham thus estimates this successful oratory:—

His most celebrated speech was certainly the "Begum Charge," in the proceedings against Hastings; and nothing can exceed the accounts left us of its unprecedented success. Not only the practice then first began, which has gradually increased till it greets every good speech, of cheering, on the speaker resuming his seat, but the minister besought the House to adjourn the decision of the question, as being incapacitated from forming a just judgment under the influence of such powerful eloquence; while men on all sides vied with each other in extolling so wonderful a performance. Nevertheless, the opinion has now become greatly prevalent, that a portion of this success was owing to the speech having so greatly surpassed all the speaker's former efforts; to the extreme interest of the topics which the subject naturally presented; and to the artist-like elaboration and beautiful delivery of certain fine passages, rather than to the merits of the whole. Certain it is, that the reputation of great part of it, presented in the shorthand notes of the speech on the same charge in Westminster Hall, disappoints every reader who has heard of the success which attended the earlier effort.—*Statesmen of the time of George* III.

In the month of April following, Mr. Sheridan opened the seventh charge, which accused Hastings of corruption in receiving bribes and presents. This branch of the case, though not so susceptible of eloquence as the former, had the advantage of being fully borne out by testimony, and formed one of the decided features of the case.

At the commencement of the proceedings against Hastings, an occurrence immediately connected with them brought

Sheridan and his early friend Halhed * together, under circumstances as different as can well be imagined from those under which they had parted as boys. The distance, indeed, that had separated them in the interval was hardly greater than the divergence that had taken place in their pursuits; for, while Sheridan had been converted into a senator and statesman, the lively Halhed had become an East Indian judge, and a learned commentator on the Gentoo laws. Upon the subject, too, on which they now met, their views and interests were wholly opposite,—Sheridan being the accuser of Hastings, and Halhed his friend.—*Moore.*

"WHERE'S THE BAG?"

At the trial of Hastings, it was usual for the manager, when speaking, to be assisted by one of his brother managers, who carried *the bag* that contained his papers, and read out whatever minutes might be referred to in the course of the argument. Mr. Michael Angelo Taylor was the person who undertook this office for Sheridan; but on the morning of his reply on the Begum charge, upon Mr. Taylor asking for the bag he was to carry, he was told by Sheridan that there was none—neither bag nor papers. They must manage, he said, as well as they could without them. As for himself, "he would abuse Ned Law, ridicule Plumer's long orations, make the court laugh, please the women, and, in short, with Taylor's aid, would get triumphantly through the task." He commenced his reply; but it was not long before the Chancellor interrupted him with a request that some printed minutes of evidence to which he referred should be read. Sheridan answered that his friend Mr. Taylor would read them; and Mr. Taylor affected to send for the bag, while the orator begged leave, in the meantime, to proceed. Again, however, his statements rendered a reference to the minutes necessary, and again he was interrupted by the Chancellor, while an outcry after Mr. Sheridan's bag was raised in every direction. At first, the blame was laid on the solicitor's clerk; then a messenger was despatched to Mr. Sheridan's house. In the meantime, the orator proceeded brilliantly and successfully in his argument, though not without further interruption and expostulation from the Chancellor.

During the bustle produced by the inquiries after the bag,

* See page 7.

Mr. Fox, alarmed at the inconvenience which he feared the want of it might occasion to Sheridan, ran up from the managers' room, and eagerly demanded the cause of this mistake from Mr. Taylor; who, hiding his mouth with his hand, whispered him, with expressive humour, "*The man has no bag!*"

The whole of this characteristic contrivance was evidently intended by Sheridan to raise that sort of surprise at the readiness of his resources, which it was the favourite triumph of his vanity to create.

IMPEACHMENT OF MR. HASTINGS.

On June 3, 1788, Mr. Sheridan brought forward, in Westminster Hall, the same charge which he had already enforced with such wonderful talent in the House of Commons. "Accordingly," says Moore, "Mr. Sheridan had the glory of again opening, in the very same field, a new and abundant spring of eloquence, which, during four days, diffused its enchantment among an assembly of the most illustrious persons of the land."*

As some atonement to the world for the loss of the Speech in the House of Commons, this second masterpiece of eloquence on the same subject has been preserved to us, in a Report from the short-hand notes of Mr. Gurney, which was for some time in the possession of the Duke of Norfolk, but was afterwards restored to Mr. Sheridan, and was then handed to Mr. Moore, who has quoted from it several passages, in his *Life of Sheridan*.

The reading of the charges and answers of Hastings occupied two days. On the third day Burke rose with his opening speech.†

* Lord Macaulay's picture of Westminster Hall prepared for the Impeachment is one of the most brilliant pieces of writing in our language. It first appeared in Macaulay's paper on Gleig's Memoirs of Hastings, in the *Edinburgh Review*, October, 1841, and was reprinted in Longman and Co.'s Traveller's Library, 1852. (See pp. 90—93.)

† Burke's share in this great trial is narrated in *Anecdote Biography*, First Series, pp. 252—260: the first volume of the present work. The object in the present volume is to narrate such incidents as more especially relate to Sheridan's share in the important inquiry. At page 256 is recorded the publication of the first and second volume of Mr. Bond's authorized Report of the Speeches of the Managers and Counsel; Vols. III. and IV. have since been published, comprising the

Sheridan's great speech occupied four days: it was interrupted on the third by his sudden indisposition. The comments upon the documents were enlivened by those light touches of conversational humour, all that by-play of eloquence of which the orator was such a consummate master. But, says his biographer, it was on the fourth day of the oration that he rose into his most ambitious flights, and produced some of those dazzling bursts of declamation, of which the traditional fame is most vividly preserved. Among the audience of that day was Gibbon, and the mention of his name in the following passage not only produced its effect at the moment, but, as connected with literary anecdote, will make the passage itself long memorable. Having reprobated the violence and perfidy of the Governor-General, in forcing the Nabob to plunder his own relatives and friends, he adds:—

I do say, that if you search the history of the world, you will not find an act of tyranny and fraud to surpass this; if you read all past histories, peruse the Annals of Tacitus, read the luminous page of Gibbon,* and all the ancient or modern writers that have searched into the depravity of former ages to draw a lesson for the present, you will not find an act of treacherous, deliberate, cool cruelty, that could exceed this.

On being asked by some honest brother Whig, at the conclusion of the speech, how he came to compliment Gibbon with the epithet "luminous," Sheridan answered, in a half-whisper, "I said *vo*luminous." It is well known that the simile of the vulture and the lamb, which occurs in the address of Rolla to the Peruvians, in *Pizarro*, had been previously employed by Mr. Sheridan, in this speech.

In the peroration it is skilfully and without the appearance of design, contrived that the same sort of appeal to the purity of British justice, with which the oration opened, should recur at its close. Mr. Hastings, it appeared, had used the

conclusion of the Speeches of Hastings's Counsel, and the replies of the Managers, accompanied by Mr. Bond's excellent summary of the Proceedings between the 1st of May, 1792, and the 23rd of April, 1795, when the trial was brought to a conclusion, and Hastings pronounced not guilty.

* Gibbon thought it an event worthy of record in his Memoirs. "Before my departure from England, (he says,) I was present at the august spectacle of Mr. Hastings's Trial in Westminster Hall. It is not my province to absolve or condemn the Governor of India; but Mr. Sheridan's eloquence demanded my applause; nor could I hear without emotion the personal compliment which he paid me in the presence of the British nation. From this display of genius, which blazed four successive days," &c.

pompous phrase of the "Majesty of Justice," which is turned to account by Sheridan, in bringing his masterly statement to a close. After describing Justice in India, he adds:

But I will ask your Lordships, do you approve this representation? Do you feel this is the true image of Justice? Is this the character of British Justice? Are these her features? Is this her countenance? Is this her gait or her mien? No; I think even now I hear you calling upon me to turn from this vile libel, this base caricature, this Indian pagod, formed by the hand of guilty and knavish tyranny, to dupe the heart of ignorance, and to turn from this deformed idol to the true Majesty of Justice here. *Here*, indeed, I see a different form, enthroned by the sovereign hand of Freedom—awful without severity—commanding without pride—vigilant and active without restlessness or suspicion—searching and inquisitive without meanness or debasement—not arrogantly scorning to stoop to the voice of afflicted innocence, and in its loveliest attitude when bending to uplift the suppliant at its feet.

But this second speech was, in the judgment of Fox and others, much inferior to the first on the same subject. Burke is said to have exclaimed to Mr. Fox, during the delivery of some passages of it, "There—that is the true style;—something between poetry and prose, and better than either." The severer taste of Mr. Fox dissented: he replied that "he thought such a mixture was for the advantage of neither—as producing poetic prose, or still worse, prosaic poetry." Burke went still farther: he declared that "the various species of eloquence that had been heard, either in ancient or modern times—whatever the acuteness of the bar, the dignity of the senate, or the morality of the pulpit, could furnish—had not been equal to what that House had that day heard in Westminster Hall." Sheridan, when he had concluded, contrived to sink back, as if exhausted, into the arms of Burke, who hugged him with the energy of generous admiration.

Mill, the historian of India, who was an auditor of both speeches, namely, that in the Commons and in the Hall, was decidedly of opinion that Sheridan's second effort was greater than the first. But Lord Grenville, who had the same advantage, has recorded this very opposite conclusion: "Sheridan's Speech on the Begums in the House of Commons, admirable; in Westminster Hall, contemptible. I heard both." —(*Recollections of Samuel Rogers*, p 181.)

But, there was one who sate in Westminster Hall in all the beauty of womanhood, who was more immediately interested in the orator's glory, and who seems to have felt it, as women alone can feel; this was his dear wife.

"I have delayed writing," says Mrs. Sheridan, in a letter to her sister-in-law, "till I could gratify myself and you by sending you the news of our dear Dick's triumph—of *our* triumph, I may call it; for surely, no one, in the slightest degree connected with him, but must feel proud and happy. It is impossible, my dear woman, to convey to you the delight, the astonishment, the adoration he has excited in the breasts of every class of people! Every party prejudice has been overcome by a display of genius, eloquence, and goodness, which no one, with anything like a heart about them, could have listened to, without being the wiser and the better for the rest of their lives. What must *my* feelings be! You only can imagine. To tell you the truth, it is with some difficulty that I can let down my mind, as Mr. Burke said afterwards, to talk or think on any other subject. But pleasure, too exquisite, becomes pain, and I am at this moment suffering for the delightful anxieties of last week."

Walpole writes to Mr. T. Barrett, June 5, 1788: "Mr. Sheridan, I hear, did not quite satisfy the passionate expectations that had been raised; but it was impossible he could, when people had worked themselves into an enthusiasm of offering fifty—ay, *fifty* guineas for a ticket to hear him. Well! we are sunk deplorably in many points, yet not absolutely gone, when history and eloquence throw out such shoots!"

A few days later, June 18, Walpole writes to the Earl of Stratford: "everybody else is drowned by Mr. Sheridan, whose renown has engrossed all Fame's tongues and trumpets. Lord Townshend said he should be sorry were he forced to give a vote directly on Hastings, before he had time to cool; and one of the Peers saying the speech had not made the same impression on him, the Marquis replied, A seal might be finely cut, and yet not be in fault for making a bad impression." . . . "I hope that the poor Begums are alive to hear of his (Sheridan's) speech; it will be some comfort, though I doubt, nobody thinks of restoring them a quarter of a lac!"

Mr. Nicholls, an apologist of Hastings, had the courage to state publicly: "On this charge (the Begum charge), Mr. Sheridan made a speech which both sides of the House professed greatly to admire, for Mr. Pitt now openly approved of the Impeachment. *I will acknowledge that I did not admire this speech of Mr. Sheridan.*"

A remarkable testimony to the influence of Sheridan's eloquence in this great cause is related by Bisset, in his *History of the Reign of George III.* as follows: "The late Mr. Logan, author of a most masterly defence of Mr. Hastings, went on the above day, to the House of Commons, prepossessed for the accused,

and against the accuser. At the expiration of the first hour, he said to a friend, 'All this is declamatory assertion without proof.' When the second was finished, 'This is a most wonderful oration;' at the close of the third, 'Mr. Hastings has acted very unjustifiably;' the fourth, 'Mr. Hastings is a most atrocious criminal;' and, at last, 'Of all monsters of iniquity, the most enormous is Warren Hastings!'"

DEATH OF MR. THOMAS SHERIDAN.

In the summer of 1788, the father of Mr. Sheridan died at Margate, where he was consoled in his last moments by his son Richard, though it has been slanderously said that he expired unattended by any of his nearest relatives. In a letter written by the elder sister of Sheridan, a short time after his death, in referring to the difference that existed between him and his father, she says: "And yet it was that son, and not the object of his partial fondness, who at last closed his eyes." Mr. Moore adds: "It generally happens that the injustice of such partialities is revenged by the ingratitude of those who are the objects of them; and the present instance, as there is too much reason to believe, was not altogether an exception to the remark."

In one of the latest interviews, the father showed himself to be strongly impressed by his son's attention, saying, with considerable emotion, "Oh! Dick, I give you a great deal of trouble!" and seeming to imply by his manner, that his son had been less to blame than himself, for any previous want of cordiality between them.

Mr. Thomas Sheridan was buried in the Church at St. Peter's, where a monument was erected to his memory, with an inscription written by the learned and kind-hearted Dr. Parr.

SHERIDAN IN PROSPERITY.

We are disposed to consider the year 1789 as the most prosperous period of Sheridan's life, whether we consider his fame, his talents, or his happiness. Of his triumphs in eloquence, and his influence in the Regency we have just spoken. At home he was happy; for though pecuniary embarrassment, as appears from his papers, had already begun to weave its fatal net around him, there was as yet little more than sufficient to give exercise to his ingenuity, and the resources of Drury-lane treasury were still in full nightly

flow. The charms by which his home was embellished were such as few other homes could boast.

Among his own immediate associates, the gaiety of his spirits amounted almost to boyishness. He delighted in all sorts of dramatic tricks and disguises, and the lively parties with which his country-house was filled were always on the look-out for some new device for their mystification or amusement; and it was not unusual to despatch a man and horse seven or eight miles for a piece of crape or a mask, or some other such trifle, for these frolics. His friends Tickell and Richardson, both men of wit and humour, and the former possessing the same degree of light animal spirits as Sheridan, were the constant companions of his social hours, and kept up with him that ready rebound of pleasantry, without which the play of wit languishes.

To give some idea of the youthful tone of this society, Mr. Moore relates the following: One evening the ladies received the gentlemen in masquerade dresses, which, with their obstinate silence made it impossible to distinguish the one from the other. The gentlemen, in their turn, invited the ladies to a similar trial of conjecture on themselves, as a party of Turks, sitting silent and masked, round the dining-table. Mrs. Sheridan and her companions guessed, and each lady took the arm of the person she was most sure of—when a loud burst of laughter was heard, and through the half-open door were seen the gentlemen themselves in their proper persons;—the *masks* upon which the ladies had been guessing, being no other than the maid-servants of the house, who had been dressed up to deceive them.

In 1790, Mrs. Sheridan was trying the waters of Tunbridge for her health: she writes to Sheridan's sister in September, "I drink the waters once a day, and ride all the forenoon, which makes me ravenous when I return. I feel I am in very good health, and I am told that I am in high beauty, two circumstances which ought, and do put me in high good humour."

SHERIDAN IN PARLIAMENT.

In the year 1790, during the measures and discussions consequent upon the French Revolution, a breach occurred between Sheridan and Burke, provoked by a warm speech of the former in favour of the Revolution, and of the National Assembly, and which caused Mr. Burke to declare that,

"henceforth his honourable friend and he were separated in politics." Mr. Sheridan was much blamed for his speech; and a reconciliation of the two great men was attempted by Mr. Fox and the Duke of Portland at Burlington House, in an interview which lasted from ten o'clock at night until three in the morning, but without effect.

During the session Sheridan's speeches on a motion of his own for the repeal of the Excise Duties on Tobacco, occupied nearly forty pages; and unpromising as the subject appeared, in these orations upon tobacco occur examples of "the two extremes of Sheridan's dramatic talent, both of the broad, natural humour of his farce, and the pointed, artificial wit of his comedy." For instance, he illustrated the party abuses that might arise from the discretionary power of remitting fines to manufacturers. The commissioners might say to one, "Sir, you need not give yourself so much trouble to prove your innocence; we see honesty in your orange cape;" but to a person opposite in politics, "Sir, you are not to be believed; we see fraud in your blue and buff, and it is impossible that you should not be a smuggler;" the question having turned upon the weather alone having caused the increase or decrease of the article:

The commissioners, before they could, in justice, levy fines, ought to ascertain that the weather is always in that precise state of heat or cold which the Act supposed it would be. They ought to make Christmas give security for frost, take a bond for hot weather from August, and oblige damps and fogs to take out permits.

STAFFORD ELECTION, 1790.

In June, Parliament was dissolved, and Mr. Sheridan again succeeded in being elected for Stafford. The following paragraph from a letter of Mrs. Sheridan's to "dear Dick" during the election, is not, however, very cheering:

I am more than ever convinced we must look to some other resources for wealth and independance, and consider politics merely as an amusement,—and in that light 'tis best to be in opposition, which I am afraid we are likely to be for some years again.

There was evidently some doubt as to his return for Stafford: in one of her letters his wife says:

My dearest Dick,—I am full of anxiety and fright about you—I cannot but think your letters are very alarming. Deuce take the Corporation! is it impossible to make them resign their pretensions, and make peace with the Burgesses? I have sent Thomas after Mr. Cocker. I suppose you have sent for the outvotes; but, if they are

not good, what a terrible expense will that be!—however, they are ready. I saw Mr. Cocker yesterday,—he collected them together last night, and gave them a treat,—so they are in high good humour. . . . . God bless thee, my dear, dear Dick,—would it were all over and all well! I am afraid, at any rate, it will be ruinous work."

Upon Sheridan's return to town, he hastened to aid his friend Fox on the hustings at Westminster, where he had to encounter the cool personalities of Horne Tooke. Among other sallies of his splenetic humour it is related, that Mr. Fox having, upon one occasion, retired from the hustings, and left to Sheridan the task of addressing the multitude, Tooke remarked, that such was always the practice of quack doctors, who, whenever they quit the stage themselves, make it a rule to leave their merry-andrews behind.

Mr. Moore also relates of this election the following anecdote, which has the true old Westminster flavour:

Tooke, it is said, upon coming one Monday morning to the hustings, was thus addressed by a partizan of his opponent, not of a very reputable character:—"Well, Mr. Tooke, you will have all the blackguards with you to day."—"I am delighted to hear it, sir," said Tooke, bowing, "and from such good authority."

DEATH OF MRS. SHERIDAN.

In the year 1792, Mrs. Sheridan died of consumption, at Bristol, in the 38th year of her age. The qualities exhibited by this accomplished and lovely person are very striking: a Bishop used to say that "she seemed to him the connecting link between woman and angel;" and Jackson of Exeter said that to see her, as she stood beside him at the pianoforte, was "like looking into the face of an angel." While her beauty and music enchanted the world, she had charms more intrinsic and lasting.

Her attachment to her husband in his many trials was of the most enduring nature. In a letter to her sister, she writes: "As you know, poor Dick and I have always been struggling against the stream, and shall probably continue to do so to the end of our lives,—yet we would not change sentiments or sensations with * * * for all his estate."

Her last hours are thus touchingly narrated. Dr. Bain was sent for at midnight. Mrs. Canning and Sheridan were in the room when the doctor arrived. Mrs. Sheridan begged them to go away for a moment, and bad Dr. Bain lock the door after them; she then said, "You have never deceived me:

tell me truly shall I live over this night?" B. felt her pulse; found she was dying, and said, "I recommend you to take some laudanum." She answered, "I understand you, then give it me." Dr. Bain said, that the laudanum, he knew, would prolong her life a little, and enable her to go through the scene that was before her in taking leave of her family.

The affectionate care with which she watched over, not only her own children, but those which her beloved sister, Mrs. Tickell, confided to her in dying, gives the finish to this picture of domestic usefulness. Of the happiness of her union with Sheridan, it has been said that "it was believed of both, by those who knew them best, that, even when they seemed most attracted by other objects, they would willingly, had they consulted the real wishes of their hearts, have given up every one in the world for each other."—(*Moore.*) How little her heart went along with the gaieties into which her husband's connexion with the world of fashion and politics led her, is shown in these few lines from a letter to her sister:

I hope in a very short time now to get into the country. The Duke of Norfolk has lent us a house within twenty miles of London;* and I am impatient to be once more out of this noisy, dissipated town, where I do nothing that I really like, and am forced to appear pleased with everything odious to me.

Sheridan was deeply distressed at his wife's sufferings. His sister tells us that "he is as attentive and watchful as if he expected every moment to be her last. It is impossible for any man to behave with greater tenderness, or to feel more on such an occasion, than he does."

The following striking reflection, found upon a scrap of paper, in Sheridan's handwriting, was suggested, no doubt, by his feelings on this occasion: "The loss of the breath from a beloved object, long suffering in pain and certainty to die, is not so great a privation as the loss of her beautiful remains, if they remain so. The victory of the grave is sharper than the sting of death."

Dr. Bain tells us that the tenderness and affection that Sheridan evinced on the occasion, was quite "the devotedness

* Probably the Deepdene, near Dorking, in Surrey, then (1788) the property of Charles, eleventh Duke of Norfolk. This estate, however, is twenty-three miles from the metropolis. If our surmise be correct, the name of Sheridan must be added to the list of personages distinguished in science, literature, and art, who, through a century and a half, enjoyed the delightful seclusion of the Deepdene.

of a lover;" and Sheridan, in acknowledging the Doctor's professional efforts, says: "The recollection of them will live in my mind with the memory of the dear lost object, whose sufferings you soothed, and whose heart was grateful for it."

Mrs. Sheridan's remains were laid in Wells Cathedral, beside those of her beloved sister; the choir attended, and there was a great concourse of people.

This affliction made a wonderful alteration in the expression of Sheridan's countenance, and in his manners. A noble friend of his was heard to say that, happening about this time to sleep in the room next to him, he could plainly hear him sobbing throughout the greater part of the night.

The consolation which Sheridan derived from his little daughter was not long spared to him. A large party of young people were assembled at Sheridan's house which he had lately taken at Wanstead, to spend a joyous evening in dancing. They were all in the height of their merriment—Sheridan himself remarkably cheerful, and partaking of the amusement, when the alarm was given that the poor little girl was dying! The father was frantic — assistance was given—but her precious life was soon at an end! The dear babe's resemblance to her mother after her death was so much the more striking, that it was impossible to see her without recalling the afflicting scene of her death, and Sheridan was, for some days, continually in the room indulging the sad remembrance.

SHERIDAN AND MADAME DE GENLIS.

In October, 1792, a romantic adventure occurred to Madame de Genlis, on the road between London and Dartford. This lady had, at the close of 1791, with a view of escaping the turbulent scenes then passing in France, come over with her illustrious pupil, Mademoiselle d'Orleans, and her adopted daughter, Pamela, to England, where she received considerable attention both from Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan. It was on her return to France that the adventure occurred, in the contrivance of which the practical humour of Sheridan, it is thought, may be detected; more especially as the lady's imagination had been for some time on the watch for such incidents; since she mentions, in another place, her terrors at the idea of "crossing the desert plains of Newmarket without an escort."

We left London, (says Madame de Genlis,) on the 20th of October, at ten o'clock in the morning, in two carriages, with our maids, one French servant, and a footman whom we had hired to attend us as far as Dover. When we were about a quarter of a league from London, the French servant, who had never made the journey from Dover to London but once before, thought he perceived that we were not in the right road, and on making this remark to me, I perceived it also. The postilions, on being questioned, said that they only wished to avoid a small hill, and that they would soon return into the high-road again. After an interval of three-quarters of an hour, seeing that we still continued our way through a country that was entirely unknown to me, I again interrogated the footman and the postilions, and they repeated their assurance that we should soon regain the usual high-road.

Notwithstanding this, however, we still pursued our course with extreme rapidity, in the same unknown route. My companions and I began to look at each other with a mixture of uneasiness and surprise. We renewed our inquiries, and at last the post-boys answered that it was indeed true that they had lost their way, but that they wished to conceal it from us till they found the cross-road to Dartford, (our first stage,) and that now, having been for an hour and a half in that road, we had but two miles to go to reach Dartford. At last, after nearly an hour had elapsed, seeing that we still had not arrived at the end of our stage, our uneasiness increased to terror. It was not without much difficulty that I made the post-boys stop opposite a small village which lay to our left; in spite of my shouts, they still went on, till at last the French servant, (for the other did not interfere,) compelled them to stop. I then sent to the village to inquire how far we were from Dartford, and to my surprise received for answer that we were now twenty-two miles from that place. Concealing my suspicions, I now took a guide in the village, and declared that it was my wish to return to London, as I found I was now at a less distance from that city than from Dartford. The post-boys resisted my desire, and even behaved with insolence, but our French servant, backed by the guide, compelled them to obey.

As we returned at a very slow pace, owing to the sulkiness of the post-boys, and the fatigue of the horses, we did not reach London before night-fall, when I immediately drove to Mr. Sheridan's house. He was extremely surprised to see me returned, and on my relating to him our adventure, agreed with us that it could not have been the result of mere chance. He then sent for a justice of the peace to examine the post-boys, who were detained till his arrival under the pretence of calculating their account;—but in the meantime the hired footman disappeared, and never returned. The post-boys being examined by the justice according to the legal form, and in the presence of witnesses, gave their answers in a very confused way, but confessed that an unknown gentleman had come in the morning to their master's, and carrying them from thence to a public-house, had, by giving them something to drink, persuaded them to take the road by which we had gone. The examination was continued for a long time, but no further confession could be drawn from them. Mr. Sheridan told me that there was sufficient proof on which to ground an action against these men, but that it would be a tedious process, and cost a great deal of money. The post-boys were, therefore, dismissed, and we did not

pursue the inquiry any further. As Mr. Sheridan saw the terror I was in at the very idea of again venturing on the road to Dover, he promised to accompany us thither himself, but added, that, having some indispensable business on his hands, he could not go for some days.

He then took Madame de Genlis and her friends to his country-home at Isleworth, where they remained for a month.

Sheridan's love of practical jokes led to this adventure being set down as his contrivance: the ready attendance of the Justice—the "unknown gentleman" deposed to by the post-boys—the disappearance of the footman, and the advice given by Sheridan that the affair should proceed no further—all savoured strongly of dramatic construction. With respect to his motive, the agreeable month at his country-house sufficiently explains it. At the end of the month, Sheridan, with his son, and a friend, accompanied Madame de Genlis and her party to Dover, where, the wind being adverse, they were detained five days, Sheridan remaining with them; when they embarked for France.

Madame de Genlis, in her Memoir, has supplied a still more interesting key to Sheridan's motive for the above contrivance. It appears that he was passionately in love with Pamela, and that before her departure the following scene took place. "Two days before we started," says Madame de Genlis, "Mr. Sheridan made, in my presence, his declaration of love to Pamela, who was affected by his agreeable manner and high character, and accepted the offer of his hand with pleasure. In consequence of this, it was settled that he was to marry her on our return from France, which was expected to take place in a fortnight." This Mr. Moore suspects to have been but a continuation of the Romance of Dartford.

DRURY-LANE THEATRE REBUILT.

The theatre having been, in the preceding year, reported by the surveyors to be unsafe and incapable of repair, in 1792 it was determined to erect an entirely new house upon the same site. For this purpose Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Linley proposed to raise 150,000*l.*, by means of 300 debentures, of 500*l.* each. This part of the scheme succeeded instantly; and at the head of the list stand the names of the three trustees, in whom the Theatre was afterwards vested, in 1793. In the meantime, the company were playing, at an enormous expense, first, in the Opera-house, and afterwards

at the Haymarket Theatre; and Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Linley were paying interest for the first instalment of the loan.

The new theatre was built by Holland;* it was considerably larger than the present one, their respective dimensions being 320 × 155 and 240 × 135: the roof was surmounted by a colossal statue of Apollo. This new theatre was opened on April 21, 1794. Sheridan assisted in producing early a little piece called *The Glorious First of June*, immediately after Lord Howe's victory; it was written, rehearsed and acted within three days. Sheridan had ordered the machinists of the theatre to construct two pasteboard fleets: it was in vain urged to be impossible: nevertheless, they were got ready, and the Duke of Clarence attended the rehearsal of their evolutions. "This mixture of the cares of the statesman and the manager," says Moore, "is one of those whimsical peculiarities that made Sheridan's own life so dramatic, and formed a compound altogether too singular ever to occur again."

This was not, however, a time of prosperity with Sheridan; for to the heavy expenses of the theatre must be added his maintenance of three establishments — one at Wanstead, where his son resided with a tutor: another at Isleworth; and the third his town-house in Jermyn-street; all which greatly contributed to his increasing embarrassments.

SHERIDAN'S WAGERS.

The love of betting was the only sort of gambling in which Sheridan ever indulged: here are a few specimens selected from his list of wagers for 1793:

25th May, 1793.—Mr. Sheridan bets Gen. Fitzpatrick one hundred guineas to fifty guineas, that within two years from this date some

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* The house which this theatre replaced was the second Drury-lane Theatre built upon the same spot. The first, "The King's House," was built for Killigrew; burnt down 1671-2. It was rebuilt by Sir Christopher Wren, and opened March 26, 1674, with a prologue and epilogue by Dryden, who had a share in the speculation of this "new playhouse." Garrick, in 1747, commenced here the revival of Shakspeare's plays: in 1776, Garrick enlarged the theatre, and took into it some part of the Rose tavern adjoining. Sheridan's new theatre was called by Mrs. Siddons "The Wilderness:" the opening for the curtain was forty-three feet wide and thirty-eight feet high, or nearly seven times the height of the performers: there were seats for 3,600 persons; but upwards of 5,000 persons are known to have been squeezed into this theatre.—See *Curiosities of London:* Theatres, p. 716.

measure is adopted in Parliament which shall be (*bonâ fide*) considered as the adoption of a parliamentary reform.

29*th January*, 1793.—Mr. S. bets Mr. Boothby Clopton five hundred guineas, that there is a reform in the representation of the people of England within three years from the date hereof.

25*th March*, 1793.—Mr. S. bets Mr. Hardy one hundred guineas, that the three per cent. consols are as high this day twelvemonth as at the date hereof.

19*th March*, 1793.—Lord Titchfield and Lord W. Russell bet Mr. S. three hundred guineas to two hundred guineas, that Mr. Pitt is First Lord of the Treasury on the 19th of March, 1795.

Mr. S. bets Gen. Tarleton one hundred guineas to fifty guineas, that Mr. Pitt is First Lord of the Treasury on the 28th of May, 1795.—Mr. S. bets Mr. St. A. St. John fifteen guineas to five guineas; ditto. Mr. S. bets Lord Sefton one hundred and fifty guineas to forty guineas, ditto.

That his bets were sometimes unguardedly made is evident from a letter from Sheridan respecting the non-payment of five hundred guineas, regretting that he cannot, at this juncture, command the money; he then adverts to the circumstance which misled him into the expectation of reasonable time being allowed for the payment of this bet; this circumstance being, however discreditable the plea, "the total inebriety of some of the party, particularly of myself, when I made this preposterous bet." At the same time he admits the bet to be as fairly won as possible.

SUGAR-ISLAND WAR.

Sheridan, in 1793, was altogether opposed to Mr. Pitt's mode of carrying on the War with France, by distracting the efforts of England from the heart of French power to its remote extremities, in what Mr. Windham called "a war upon sugar-islands;" and in the following year Sheridan quoted in a speech the remark of a distinguished lady, who said to the Minister, upon hearing of some new acquisitions in the West Indies, "I protest, Mr. Pitt, if you go on thus, you will soon be master of every island in the world, except just those two little ones, England and Ireland."

That Sheridan continued to take this view appears from his speech in 1808, when he observed that "the various governments which this country had seen since the Revolution of France, were always employed in filching for a sugar-island, or some other object of comparatively trifling moment, while the main and principal purpose was lost and forgotten."

ROYAL VICTIMS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

In the course of 1793, Sheridan took frequent opportunities of expressing his disgust at the ferocity of the Revolution; and so earnest was his interest in the fate of the Royal Family of France, that, as appears from one of his speeches, he drew up a paper on the subject, and transmitted it to the republican rulers; with the view, no doubt, of conveying to them the feelings of the English opposition, and endeavouring to avert, by the influence of his own name, and that of Mr. Fox, the catastrophe that awaited those Royal victims of liberty. Of this interesting document Mr. Moore could not discover any traces.

ALARMISTS RIDICULED.

When, in 1793, Sheridan submitted to Parliament a motion relative to the existence of seditious practices in the country, he thus ridiculed the panic then prevalent:

> The alarm had been brought forward in great pomp and form on Saturday morning. At night all the mail-coaches were stopped; the Duke of Richmond stationed himself, among other curiosities, at the Tower; a great municipal officer, too, had made a discovery exceedingly beneficial to the people of this country. He meant the Lord Mayor of London, who had found out that there was, at the King's Arms, in Cornhill, a debating society, where principles of a most dangerous tendency were propagated; where people were to buy treason at sixpence a-head; where it was retailed to them by the glimmering of an inch of candle; and five minutes, to be measured by the glass, were allowed to each traitor to perform his part in overturning the State.

Again, in Sheridan's admirable answer to Lord Mornington, in the Session of 1794, we find this lively passage. Having alluded to the assertion of Lord Mornington, that "Revolutions are always the work of the minority," Sheridan adds:

> If this be true, it certainly is a most ominous thing for the enemies of Reform in England; for if it hold true, of necessity, that the minority still prevails, in national contests, it must be a consequence that the smaller the minority, the more certain must be the success. In what a dreadful situation, then, must the noble Lord be, and all the Alarmists!—for, never surely was a minority so small, so thin in number as the present. Conscious, however, that M. Condorcet was mistaken in our object, I am glad to find that we are terrible in proportion as we are few; I rejoice that the liberality of secession which has thinned our ranks, has only served to make us more formidable. The Alarmists will hear this with new apprehensions; they will no doubt return to us with a view to diminish our force, and encounter us with their alliance in order to reduce us to insignificance.

This is the only speech of Sheridan which was corrected for publication by himself; and it shows the benefit of his correcting hand: the last pointed sentence was originally thus: "And we shall swell our numbers in order to come nearer in a balance of insignificance to the numerous host of the majority."

SHERIDAN AND CANNING.

It was in the Session of 1794, on the question of the Treaty with the King of Sardinia, that Mr. Canning first made his appearance as an orator in the House. From the political faith in which he had been educated, under the very eyes of Mr. Sheridan, who had long been the friend of his family, and at whose home he generally passed his college vacations, the line that he was to take in the House of Commons seemed already marked out for him; and Mr. Sheridan went so far as to announce the accession which his own party was about to receive in the talents of his companion and friend. Whether this and other friendships formed by Mr. Canning at the University, had any share in alienating him from the political creed which he may not have adopted from choice, or whether he was startled at the idea of appearing for the first time in the world, as the announced pupil and friend of a person, marked, both by the vehemence of his politics and the irregularities of his life—or whether he saw the difficulties in rising under the shadowing branches of the Whig aristocracy, who had kept such men as Burke and Sheridan out of the Cabinet—*which* of these motives it was that now decided the choice of Canning can scarcely be now determined. But it is certain that he decided in favour of the Minister and Toryism; and after a friendly and candid explanation to Sheridan of the reasons and feelings that had urged him to this step, he entered into terms with Mr. Pitt, and was by him immediately brought into Parliament. Nevertheless, his first political lessons were derived from sources too sacred to his young admiration to be forgotten; and they enabled him to infuse some of the spirit of the times into the body which he had thus joined.—*Abridged* from *Moore's Life of Sheridan*, vol. ii.

SHERIDAN'S SECOND MARRIAGE.

In the spring of 1795, Sheridan united himself to Miss Esther Jane Ogle, daughter of the Dean of Winchester, and

grand-daughter, by the mother's side, of the former Bishop of Winchester. The lady brought him a fortune of 5,000*l.*, to which he added 15,000*l.*, which he contrived to raise by the sale of Drury-lane shares. The whole of this sum was subsequently (in 1804) laid out in the purchase, from Sir W. Geary, of the estate of Polesden, in the parish of Great Bookham, Surrey. Only those who are familiar with the picturesque beauty of the Vale of Norbury, can appreciate the scenery of Polesden: the mansion was old, but sufficient for Sheridan, who occasionally resided here until his death: two years after, the estate was purchased by Joseph Bonsor, Esq., who, in 1824, erected a handsome mansion upon the site of the old one. This gentleman considerably enlarged the property: the terrace-walk, 300 yards in length, commands many fine views of this charming country, including Box Hill, with its picturesque clothing of patronymic evergreen. In the rear of Polesden are some of the finest beech-woods in England.*

Mr. Moore has left a felicitous picture of Sheridan's new union with the young and accomplished Miss Oyle, which must have been to Sheridan like a renewal of his own youth; "and it is said by those who were in habits of intimacy with him at this period, that they had seldom seen his spirits in a state of more buoyant vivacity. He passed much of his time at the house of his father-in-law near Southampton; and in sailing about with his lovely bride on the Southampton river (in a small cutter, called the *Phœdria*, after the magic boat in the *Fairy Queen*,) forgetting for a while his debts, his theatre, and his politics." Among his companions in these excursions, were the Rev. W. Lisle Bowles, and Dr. Howley, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury.

* We remember to have heard in the village of Letherhead, several stories of Sheridan's mismanagement of his affairs, and bad credit, while he lived at Polesden. Upon one occasion of public rejoicing he left orders for the people to be supplied at his expense with beer by a common brewer of the village; but he did not like his customer, and refused to supply the beer; the people became uproarious, when a friend of Sheridan guaranteed the payment, and had eventually to disburse it. Wood was often cut and burnt green at Polesden; and one day an unfortunate butcher, who had, contrary to his master's orders, left some meat at the kitchen without payment, was sent back to recover the joint, and actually took it from the fire and carried it off in triumph.

THE MUTINY AT THE NORE.

Sheridan's conduct upon this painful occasion was one of the happiest impulses of good feeling and good sense combined, that ever public man acted upon in a situation demanding so much of both. The patriotic promptitude of his interference was very striking. His biographer heard, at but one remove from his own authority, that while the ministry were yet hesitating as to the steps they should take, Sheridan went to Mr. Dundas and said: "My advice is that you cut the buoys on the river, send Sir Charles Grey down to the coast, and set a price on Parker's head. If the Administration take this advice instantly, they will save the country—if not they will lose it; and on their refusal I will impeach them in the House of Commons this evening."

THE PRINCE OF WALES'S DEBTS.

The marriage of the Prince of Wales to the Princess Caroline of Brunswick, in the spring of 1795, led to the second application to Parliament for the liquidation of the debts of the Prince, which were calculated at 630,000*l*. On the secession of the leading Whigs in 1792, the Prince had separated himself from Mr. Fox; but occasionally communicated with Sheridan till so late as 1798. The Opposition were very cool upon the payment of the debts, except Sheridan, who, though he agreed that the application should not have been made to Parliament, gave it as his "positive opinion that the debts ought to be paid immediately, for the dignity of the country and the situation of the Prince, who ought not to be seen rolling about the streets in his state-coach, as an insolvent prodigal." With respect to the promise given in 1787, and now violated, that the Prince would not again apply to Parliament for the payment of his debts, Mr. Sheridan stated in the House, that "he advised the Prince not to make any such promise, because it was not to be expected that he could himself enforce the details of a system of economy; and, although he had men of honour and abilities about him, he was totally unprovided with men of business, adequate to such a task." But the promise was made: the Prince asked Sheridan to contradict it in Parliament, but he declined; saying, the Prince, who acknowledged that the message to Parliament had been read to him, but that he did

not understand it as containing a promise—must abide by it. And Sheridan gave his opinion that to avoid political meddling, and to have put his affairs in a state of adjustment, would have better become his high station, and tended more to secure public respect to it, than the pageantry of state liveries.

FIRST POLITICAL SERVICE TO THE WHIGS.

The first political service rendered by Mr. Sheridan to the Whigs, with whom he now closely connected himself, was the active share he took in a periodical paper called *The Englishman*, set up for the purpose of seconding, out of Parliament, the crimination and invective of which they kept up such a brisk fire within; and like Swift in the *Drapier's Letters*, to accommodate the style of the publication to the comprehension of persons in "that class of the community, who are commonly called the *honest* and *industrious*." But, as Swift missed his mark, so did Sheridan, and got into higher latitudes than his readers could follow him. *The Englishman*, however, contained some stirring pieces of political vituperation—as one cabinet minister calling another a liar, and another a coward; and Sheridan, adverting to the elevation of a degraded and reprobated officer to a high office in the State, asks whether the precedent might not lead to the introduction of characters under similar disqualifications into every department; as appointing Atheists to the mitre, Jews to the exchequer,—selecting a treasury-bench from the *Justitia*, and placing Brown Dignam on the woolsack, and Sir Hugh Palliser at the head of the Admiralty.

The Englishman was not, however, punctually conducted, and was soon dropped.

IRELAND'S SHAKSPEARE FORGERIES.

This "great and impudent forgery," as Dr. Parr called it, occurred in 1796, and entrapped Sheridan, unless we consider that he thought the experiment of performing the pseudo play was worth his while as a manager.

The younger Ireland had been at this work of fabrication since 1793; and the ecstasy of his father at his pretended discovery of manuscripts of Shakspeare, led him to fabricate the play of *Vortigern*, which Sheridan purchased for 300*l.*,

and a moiety of the profits of the first sixty nights. Sheridan tells us that he was not without his misgivings during his perusal of the manuscripts, and he did not sign the attestation of their authenticity, drawn up by Dr. Parr. On the first night of the performance, Drury-lane Theatre was crowded: the predetermined malcontents, however, began an opposition from the outset; some ill cast characters converted grave scenes into ridicule, and there ensued between the believers and sceptics a contest which endangered the property: the piece was accordingly withdrawn.

Sheridan is generally thought to have been deceived by the impostor, who, in his *Confessions*, asserts that the standard at which the former rated the genius of Shakspeare was not so high as to inspire him with a very fastidious judgment; and though Ireland can scarcely be trusted, his statement receives some confirmation from the testimony of Mr. Boaden, who tells us that "Kemble frequently expressed to him his wonder that Sheridan should trouble himself *so little* about Shakspeare.*

WILKES AND SHERIDAN.

The unprincipled character of Wilkes does not admit of dispute; but with respect to his political integrity, Sheridan's own testimony may be accepted. He was a frequent visitor at the White Lodge, Richmond Park, during the Addington ministry. On one occasion he said to Lord Sidmouth, "My visits to you may be possibly misconstrued by my friends; but I hope you know, Mr. Addington, that I have an unpurchaseable mind."—*Memoirs of Lord Sidmouth, by the late Bishop of Carlisle.*

THE PLAY OF "THE STRANGER."

In 1798, Sheridan introduced to the public the German drama of *The Stranger*, with alterations and improvements; the translation by Mr. Thompson. But Mr. Rogers had heard Sheridan declare, on two different occasions, that he had written every word of *The Stranger* from beginning to

* William Henry Ireland long survived his father; but the Shakspeare forgeries blighted his literary reputation for ever, and he died in straitened circumstances. He fabricated several sets of the Shakspeare MSS.: we remember to have seen one set (placed upon a large Bible,) for sale in the window of Harrison in Wardour-street; the pawnbroker with whom Sheridan's valuables were occasionally deposited.

end! The introduced song, "I have a silent sorrow here," was avowedly written by him, and the music of it was by the Duchess of Devonshire. The originality of the lines has been disputed; but the author only borrowed it from himself, or from a song, "Think not my love," which was given to Mr. Moore as a genuine production of Mr. Sheridan, by a gentleman nearly connected with his family.

Lord Holland related to Moore that when *The Stranger* was first performed, he dined with Sheridan and Canning for the purpose of going to see it; and when the former pulling a bottle of wine from beside him, said "I have a secret bottle here," (meaning to parody his own song in *The Stranger*, "I have a silent sorrow here,") Canning remarked, "You know, Sheridan, those verses are Tickell's," and referred to the place they were taken from; on which Sheridan answered, "But don't you know that I wrote most of those verses for Tickell?"

Rogers recollected to have seen Sheridan's pantomime of *Robinson Crusoe*, the first act of which was very good. Sheridan said he never saw Garrick on the stage; never saw a play all through.

THE TRAGIC PLAY OF "PIZARRO."

In the following year, 1799, Sheridan produced the play of *Pizarro*, which at once obtained a popularity rarely equalled. There is but little alteration from the German original; the manuscript translation or rather imitation of the Spaniards in Peru (found among his papers) being used as the ground-work of *Pizarro;* with the contribution of a few speeches, and a few short scenes re-written. The most striking incident of the play—Rolla's passage across the bridge, into which John Kemble used to infuse such heroic dignity, is Sheridan's introduction, or rather, the oration is his amplification. The address of Rolla, to whose popular sentiments the play owed much of its success, was chiefly made up by Sheridan from his speeches on the Trial of Hastings, and on the subject of Invasion.

Michael Kelly tells us that *Pizarro* was advertised, and every box in the house taken, before the fourth act of the play was begun to be written; nor had Kelly a single word of the verse for which he was to compose the music.

One evening when Kelly was entertaining a party of great folks at dinner, about ten o'clock, Mr. Sheridan appeared and

informed the company that he must carry off their host that moment to Drury-lane, and begged they would excuse him one hour, when he would return with Kelly. Contradiction was useless. Kelly says: "I went to the theatre, and found the stage and house lighted up, but only the scene-painters and carpenters there; and all this preparation was merely that Sheridan might see two scenes—Pizarro's Tent, and the Temple of the Sun."

The great author seated himself in the centre of the pit, with a large bowl of negus on the bench before him; nor would he move until it was finished. Kelly expostulated with him on the cruelty of keeping back the words for which he had to compose the music, not to speak of taking him from his friends: Sheridan's answer was, that he wished Kelly to see the Temple of the Sun, in which the choruses and marches were to come over the platform.—"To-morrow," said he, "I promise I will come and take a cutlet with you, and tell you all you have to do. My dear Mic, you know you can depend upon *me;* and I know that I can depend upon *you;* but these bunglers of carpenters require looking after." They then returned to the party at Kelly's, and did not separate till five in the morning.

Upon a future rehearsal, Kelly tells us, at length they got to work, and a curious process it was. "Here," said Sheridan, "I design a procession of the virgins of the sun, with a solemn hymn." Kelly sung a bar or two suitable for the occasion. He (Sheridan) made a sort of rumbling noise with his voice, (for he had not the slightest idea of singing a tune,) resembling a deep, gruff bow, wow, wow; but though there was not the slightest resemblance of an air in the noise he made, yet so clear were his ideas of effect, that Mic perfectly understood his meaning. Cora's song Sheridan *did* supply; and Kelly got some song-wright to do the rest after the bow, wow, wows.

Kelly adds that at the time the house was filling for the first night's performance, all that was written of *Pizarro* was actually rehearsing; and until the end of the fourth act, neither Mrs. Siddons, nor Charles Kemble, nor Barrymore, had all their speeches for the fifth. Sheridan was upstairs in the prompter's room, where he was writing the concluding scenes; and every ten minutes he brought down as much of the dialogue as he had written, piecemeal, into the green-room, abusing himself and his negligence, and making a

thousand winning and soothing apologies; and thus the play was completed and performed.

A friend having pointed out to Sheridan that Lord Kenyon had fallen asleep in one of the boxes, and that, too, in the midst of Rolla's speech to the Peruvian soldiers, the dramatist felt rather mortified; but instantly recovering his usual good-humour, he said, "Ah! poor man! let him sleep; he thinks he is on the Bench."

Mr. Pitt was accustomed to relate, very pleasantly, an amusing anecdote of a total breach of memory in some Mrs. Lloyd, a lady, or nominal housekeeper, of Kensington Palace:—"Being in company," he said, "with Mr. Sheridan, without recollecting him, while *Pizarro* was the topic of discussion, she said to him, 'And so this fine *Pizarro* is printed?' 'Yes, so I hear,' said Sherry. 'And did you ever in your life read such stuff?' cried she. 'Why, I believe it's bad enough,' quoth Sherry; 'but, at least, Madam, you must allow it's very loyal!' 'Ah!' cried she, shaking her head, 'loyal? You don't know its author as well as I do.'"

Such was the popularity of *Pizarro* that the King, George III., could not resist his desire to see it; though he had ceased to visit Drury-lane for several years.

Sheridan wrote the Prologue, of which Mr. Rogers remarks:—He was a great artist: what could be more happy in expression than the last of these lines? you may see it illustrated in the Park every Sunday:—

> Hors'd in Cheapside, scarce yet the gayer spark
> Achieves the Sunday triumph of the Park;
> Scarce yet you see him, dreading to be late,
> Scour the New Road, and dash through Grosvenor Gate;
> Anxious—yet timorous too—his steed to show,
> The hack Bucephalus of Rotten Row.
> Careless he seems, yet vigilantly sly
> Woos the stray glance of ladies passing by,
> While his off-heel, insidiously aside,
> *Provokes the caper which he seems to chide.*

Pizarro was revived a few years since, which has led to the following judicious remarks upon its dramatic merit. The most objectionable point in the original arrangement of the play was the ill-contrived and almost ludicrous manner in which retributive justice was dealt on Pizarro, who, after being bullied through five acts by Alonzo, Elvira, and Rolla,

in succession, was killed unfairly in the end; as Porson commemorates in his amusing parody:—

Four acts are tol, lol; but the fifth's my delight;
Where history's trac'd with the pen of a Varro;
And Elvira in black and Alonzo in white
Put an end to the piece by killing Pizarro.

It is but just to the memory of Kotzebue to remark that this gross departure from historical fact was a gratuitous interpolation by Sheridan. Every schoolboy might have known and remembered that Pizarro lived to conquer Peru, and was finally assassinated in his viceregal palace at Lima, by the son and friend of his early associate, Almagro, whom he executed some years before.—*Life and Times of Charles Kean, F.S.A., by J. W. Cole.*

This fictitious episode was judiciously omitted in the new arrangement of the play, at the Princess' Theatre, in 1856; and a comparison between Mr. C. Kean's printed version, and the earlier one of Sheridan, will at once show the value and amount of the alterations and introductions.

Both the *Stranger* and *Pizarro* were adaptations from wretched pieces by Kotzebue; and their inflated, false sentiment justifies these remarks of Sheridan's last critic:—

It is observable, however, and not a little edifying to observe, that when those who excel in a spirit of satire above everything else come to attempt serious specimens of the poetry and romance whose exaggerations they ridicule, they make ridiculous mistakes of their own, and of the very same kind—so allied is habitual want of faith with want of all higher power.

IMPROMPTU LOYALTY.

On the night that Hadfield attempted to assassinate George the Third in Drury-lane Theatre, on May 15, 1800, the alarm and agitation were deeply felt in every breast, save that of Majesty alone. Sheridan, ever in attendance when the King visited the theatre, stepped into the green-room, and in a few minutes wrote the following additional stanza to "God save the King," which the vocal performers then came forward and sang:—

From every latent foe,
From the assassin's blow,
Thy succour bring;
O'er him thine arm extend,
From every ill defend
Our Father, King, and Friend:
God save the King!

This extempore verse, known by the audience at once to have come from the manager, seemed particularly gratifying to their feelings, and drew forth bursts of the loudest and most sincere applause that ever, perhaps, was heard in a theatre.

THE TWO MINISTERS.

In the session of 1801, Sheridan thus humorously ridiculed the understanding supposed to exist between the ex-minister, Pitt, and his successor, Addington :—

I should like to support the present Minister on fair grounds; but what is he? a sort of *outside passenger*,—or rather, a man leading the horses round a corner, while reins, whip, and all, are in the hands of the coachman on the *box!* (*looking at Mr. Pitt's elevated seat, three or four benches above that of the Treasury*). Why not have an union of the two Ministers, or, at least some intelligible connexion? When the ex-minister quitted office, almost all the *subordinate* ministers kept their places. How was it that the whole family did not move together? Had he only one *covered wagon* to carry *friends and goods?* or has he left directions behind him that they may know where to call? I remember a fable of *Aristophanes's*, which is translated from Greek into decent English. I mention this for the country gentlemen. It is of a man that sat so long on a seat (about as long, perhaps, as the ex-minister did on the Treasury bench), that he grew to it. When Hercules pulled him off, he left all the sitting part of the man behind. The House can make the allusion.

This droll application of the fable of Hercules and Theseus to the Ministry had, however, been first made by Gilbert Wakefield, in a letter to Mr. Fox, which the latter read to Sheridan, who merely remarked, "What an odd pedantic fancy!"

SHERIDAN AND HAYDN.

When, in 1802, the National Institute of France proposed Haydn, the great composer, and Mr. Sheridan, as candidates for the class of Literature and the Fine Arts, the Institute elected Haydn. Sheridan was not a little piqued, as the following epigram found among his papers, shows :—

The wise decision all admire;
'Twas just beyond dispute—
Sound taste! which to Apollo's lyre
Preferr'd—a German flute!

DEATH OF RICHARDSON.

In the year 1803, died Sheridan's sincerely attached friend, Joseph Richardson. His remains were interred at Bagshot: with his usual unpunctuality, Sheridan arrived too late for the funeral, but succeeded in persuading the good-natured clergyman to perform the ceremony over again. John Taylor assisted at this singular scene, and also joined the party at the inn at Bedfont, afterwards, where Sheridan, it is said, drained the "cup of memory" to his friend, till he found oblivion at the bottom.

Sheridan is stated to have shown a great want of feeling about Richardson's death. When Lord Thanet spoke to him about it a fortnight after, as a melancholy thing, he said, "Yes, very provoking indeed, and all owing to that curst brandy-and-water which he *would* drink." Lord Thanet added, he thought that Sheridan was never the same man after Richardson's death. Richardson's argumentative turn was of great use to him in stirring up his mind, and making him sift thoroughly any new subject he took up. This is not improbable.

MR. THOMAS SHERIDAN.

In 1803, Lord St. Vincent, as some acknowledgment of the services which Sheridan had rendered to the Ministry (though professedly as a tribute to his public character in general), made an offer to his son, Mr. Thomas Sheridan, of the place of Registrar of the Vice-Admiralty Court of Malta, —an office which, during a period of war, is supposed to be of considerable emolument. Sheridan was, at first, not unfavourable to his son's acceptance of it; but viewing it as an obligation liable to be interpreted as a return for past services, and a *lien* upon future ones, he felt obliged to decline this provision for his son.

A letter to him from Mrs. Sheridan, at this date, refers to a most gracious message from the King to Sheridan, approving of his public conduct, and of the pleasure his Majesty should feel in conferring upon him some mark of royal favour. In this letter Mrs. Sheridan regrets the above refusal, is apprehensive that the King may not attribute it to the right motive, adding, "Would to God I could bear these necessary losses instead of Tom, particularly as I entirely approve of your conduct. I trust you will be able to do

something positive for Tom about money," &c. His fate was very tantalizing: unprovided with any profession, and, as we have just seen, shut out from means of advancement, he paid dearly for the glory of being the son of Sheridan. In the expression of his face he much resembled his beautiful mother, and derived from her also the fatal complaint of which he died.

"THE RECEIVERSHIP."

Early in 1804, on the death of Lord Elliot, the office of Receiver of the Duchy of Cornwall, which had been held by that nobleman, was bestowed by the Prince of Wales upon Mr. Sheridan, "as a trifling proof of that sincere friendship his Royal Highness had always professed and felt for him through a long series of years." His Royal Highness also added, in the same communication, the very cordial words, "I wish to God it was better worth your acceptance."

Mr. Creevey tells us that Sheridan had been very anxious to get the Prince to give the Receivership to Tom; and Creevey saw Sheridan cry while entreating the Prince on the subject. One day, Sheridan having gone to Cox's (?) where he used to receive his money for the Receivership, and requested they would lend him ten pounds on account, the clerk said, "Haven't you received my letter, sir?" Sheridan answered in the negative, the truth being (Creevey said) that letters were very often not taken in at his house for want of assets to pay the postage. The clerk then told him, to his no small surprise and joy, that there were 1,200*l.* in their hands placed to his account, and arising from some fine connected with his office. Sheridan instantly, on the strength of this, took a house at Barnes, set up a carriage, and spent the 1,200*l.* in a very few months.

Creevey was witness, in 1805, to the introduction of Sheridan for the first time to Warren Hastings, by the Prince, at the Pavilion. Sheridan said something to this effect: "You are, I am sure, too much a man of the world not to feel that all I did on that occasion (the trials) was merely in the spirit of politics," &c. Hastings appeared much pleased by his declaration, and hinted that it would be no small gratification to him, before he died, to have these sentiments made known to the world. Sheridan, on this, *backed out* as well as he could.—*Moore's Memoirs*, vol. iv. abridged.

THE "COALITION" OF 1805.

One of Sheridan's most felicitous illustrations in Parliament, was on Mr. Pitt calling back to his aid, early in 1805, the coalition of Mr. Addington, Lord Buckinghamshire, and other members of that administration, which had withered away but a few months before under the blight of his sarcasm and scorn. Upon this coalition, Sheridan said :—

The Right Honourable Gentleman went into office alone;—but lest the Government should become too full of vigour from his support, he thought proper to beckon back some of the weakness of the former administration. He, I suppose, thought that the Ministry became, from his support, like spirits above proof, and required to be diluted; that, like gold refined to a certain degree, it would be unfit for us without a certain mixture of alloy; that the administration would be too brilliant, and dazzle the House, unless he called back a certain part of the mist and fog of the last administration to render it tolerable to the eye.

—This is exquisite irony!

Sheridan objected to the coalition, to Mr. Fox's secession from Parliament, to his strong language in favour of the French Revolution, and predicted, as is said, the disastrous consequences of his India Bill; still, he uniformly adhered to Mr. Fox, and supported his politics.

With that sagacity, which in general directed his political views, Sheridan foresaw all the consequences of this ill-assorted union of parties; and is said to have exerted the whole power of his persuasion and reasoning to turn aside Mr. Fox from the measure. Unfortunately, however, the advice was not taken, and a person who witnessed the close of a conversation, in which Sheridan had been making a last effort to convince Mr. Fox of the imprudence of the step he was about to take, heard the latter, at parting, express his final resolution in the following decisive words: "It is as fixed as the Hanover succession."

It was during a debate upon the coalition that the following encounter occurred between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Sheridan;

"No man admired more than he (Mr. Pitt) did the abilities of that Right Honourable Gentleman, the elegant sallies of his thought, the gay effusions of his fancy, his dramatic turns, and his epigrammatic point; and if they were reserved for the proper stage, they would, no doubt, receive what the Honourable Gentleman's abilities always did receive, the plaudits of the audience; and it would be his fortune '*sui plausum gaudere theatri.*' But this was not the proper scene for the exhibition of these elegancies." Mr. Sheridan, in rising to explain,

said that, "On the particular sort of personality which the Right Honourable Gentleman had thought proper to make use of, he need not make any comment. The propriety, the taste, the gentlemanly point of it, must have been obvious to the House. But," said Mr. Sheridan, "let me assure the Right Honourable Gentleman, that I do now, and will at any time he chooses to repeat this sort of allusion, meet it with the most sincere good humour. Nay, I will say more—flattered and encouraged by the Right Honourable Gentleman's panegyric on my talents, if ever I again engage in the compositions he alludes to, I may be tempted to an act of presumption—to attempt an improvement on one of Ben Jonson's best characters, the character of the Angry Boy in *The Alchemist*."

Sheridan was very sensitive upon his connexion with the stage; and he used to tell that when at school he was much mortified from taunting allusions to his father's profession—being called by some of his schoolfellows "the player-boy," &c. But his gentlemanly retort upon Mr. Pitt placed him in perfect security against any future tamperings with his personal history.

The following *jeu d'esprit*, written by Sheridan himself upon this occurrence, has been found amongst his manuscripts:—

ADVERTISEMENT EXTRAORDINARY.

We hear that in consequence of a hint, lately given in the House of Commons, the play of *The Alchemist* is certainly to be performed by a set of gentlemen for our diversion, in a private apartment of Buckingham House.

The characters thus described in an old edition of Ben Jonson are to be represented in the following manner—the old practice of men's playing the female parts being adopted:—

Subtle (*the alchemist*)	Lord Sh—lb—ne.
Face (*the housekeeper*)	The Lord Ch—ll—r.
Doll Common (*their colleague*) . . .	The Lord Adv—c—te.
Drugger (*a tobacco man*)	Lord Eff—ng—m.
Epicure Mammon	Mr. R—gby.
Tribulation	Dr. J—nk—s—n.
Ananias (*a little pastor*)	Mr. H—ll.
Kastril (*the angry boy*)	Mr. W. Pitt.
Dame Pliant	Gen. C—nw—y.
and	
Surly	His —.

Mr. Sheridan held the office of Secretary of the Treasury under this administration, and had to bring his arithmetic into the field against Mr. Pitt. His defence of the Receipt Tax was highly amusing. Some country gentlemen having recommended a tax upon gravestones as a substitute for it, Sheridan replied that—

Such a tax, indeed, was not easily evaded, and could not be deemed oppressive, as it would only be once paid; but so great was the spirit of clamour against any tax on receipts, that he should not wonder if it extended to them; and that it should be asserted, that persons having paid the last debt—the debt of nature—Government had resolved they should pay a receipt-tax, and have it stamped over their grave. Nay, with so extraordinary a degree of inveteracy were some Committees in the City, and elsewhere, actuated, that if a receipt-tax of the nature in question was enacted, he should not be greatly surprised if it were soon after published, that such Committees had unanimously resolved that they would never be buried, in order to avoid paying the tax; but had determined to lie above ground, or have their ashes confined to family urns, in the manner of the ancients.

"INDIA BILL" PLEASANTRY.

Mr. Sheridan spoke but once during the discussions on the India Bill, when this pleasantry is reported. Mr. Scott (afterwards Lord Eldon), had in the course of the debate, indulged in a licence of Scriptural parody, and had affected to discover the rudiments of the India Bill, in a chapter of the Book of Revelations,—Babylon being the East India Company, Mr. Fox and his seven Commissioners, the beast with the seven heads, and the marks on the hand and forehead, imprinted by the beast on those around him, meaning, evidently, he said, the peerages, pensions, and places distributed by the said minister. In answering this strange sally of forensic wit, Mr. Sheridan quoted other passages from the same sacred Book, which (as the reporter gravely assures us), "spoke strongly for the Bill," and which proved that Lord Fitzwilliam and his fellow-Commissioners, instead of being the seven heads of the beast, were seven Angels "clothed in pure and white linen."

It was this clever practice of Sheridan's of turning all the Opposition said into excellent ridicule, that always brought the House into good humour with the ministers.

THE ARMY AND NAVY.

When, in 1805, Lord Melville was appointed First Lord of the Admiralty, Sheridan objected that he did not know of any peculiar qualifications his lordship had to preside over the Admiralty; but that if he were to judge from the kind of capacity he evinced while Minister of War, he should entertain little hopes of him. Sheridan proceeded:

It may be said, that as the noble lord was so unfit for the military department, the naval was the proper place for him. Perhaps there were people who would adopt this whimsical reasoning. I remember a story told respecting Mr. Garrick, who was once applied to by an eccentric Scotchman, to introduce a production of his on the stage. This Scotchman was such a good-humoured fellow, that he was called "Honest Johnny M'Cree." Johnny wrote four acts of a tragedy, which he showed to Mr. Garrick, who dissuaded him from finishing it; telling him that his talent did not lie that way; so Johnny abandoned the tragedy, and set about writing a comedy. When this was finished, he showed it to Mr. Garrick, who found it to be still more exceptionable than the tragedy, and of course could not be persuaded to bring it forward on the stage. This surprised poor Johnny, and he remonstrated. "Nay, now, David," said Johnny, "did you not tell me that my talents did not lie in tragedy?" "Yes," (replied Garrick,) "but I did not tell you that they lay in comedy." "Then," (exclaimed Johnny,) "gin they dinna lie there, where the de'il dittha lie, mon?" Unless the noble lord at the head of the Admiralty has the same reasoning in his mind as Johnny M'Cree, he cannot possibly suppose that his incapacity for the direction of the War Department necessarily qualifies him for the presidency of the naval. Perhaps, if the noble lord be told he has no talents for the latter, his lordship may exclaim with honest Johnny M'Cree, "Gin they dinna lie there, where the de'il dittha lie, mon?"

TREASURERSHIP OF THE NAVY.

Upon the formation of the Grenville Ministry in 1806, in which Sheridan had a considerable share, he was entreated not to accept any such office as the Treasurership of the Navy, (which was offered to him,) for the responsibility and business of which his friends knew his habits wholly unfitted him. He was recommended, if excluded from a seat in the cabinet, to decline all office. But he could not now afford to reject the emoluments of the place, and accepted the Treasurership of the Navy, the same office that had been allotted to him in the Regency arrangements of 1789. His official apartments were in the east wing of Somerset House.

SHERIDAN'S POLITICAL MANAGEMENT.

Sheridan's high opinion of his powers of management made him often stand aloof from his party and friends. He was the means of bringing in Sidmouth in 1806, and of bringing Ellenborough into the cabinet. He was also the primary cause of the defection of the Prince from the Whigs, when he became Regent. On that event taking place, the Prince wrote to Lords Grey and Grenville to take measures for forming an administration. Their answer was shown by the

Prince to Sheridan, who pointed out some things in it he thought objectionable. The Prince represented these to the two lords, who returned a high-toned remonstrance to him for having shown their answer to Sheridan. The latter was nettled, and with equal imprudence, made such comments on the sort of tyranny to which these lords seemed already to aspire over the Prince, and let out so many other opinions with respect to them, that His Royal Highness became alarmed, and threw himself into the arms of the Tories. Mr. Moore considers this strange conduct of the Whigs to account most satisfactorily for the defection of the Regent; and if anything could justify his duplicity and apostasy, it would be their arrogance and folly.

WHICH IS THE TRUTH?

Lord Holland used to describe a curious scene which he had with Sheridan and the Prince Regent while the Whigs were in power. Sheridan having told him (Lord H.) while they waited in an ante-chamber, about some private letter which he had corrected or re-written for the Prince, the latter, on their admission to him, told quite a different story, referring to Sheridan, who, all the while cautiously bowed assent; and, said Lord Holland, "I could not, for the soul of me, make out which was the liar."

DEATH OF C. J. FOX.

The motion of Mr. Fox against the Slave Trade was the last he ever made in Parliament, and had ever been one of the objects he most cared for. He died on the 13th of September, 1806, in the Duke of Devonshire's villa, at Chiswick. Mr. Fox is stated to have refused to see Sheridan in his last illness; but this is doubted. They had, for some time, grown more reserved to each other;* but, "it is a proof of the absence of any serious grounds for this distrust—that Sheridan was the person selected by the relatives of Mr. Fox to preside over and direct the arrangements of the funeral,

* Lord Lansdowne told Moore that his own opinion of Sheridan, which was very low indeed, was formed principally from what he had heard Mr. Fox say of him.

and that he put the last solemn seal to their long intimacy, by following his friend, as mourner, to the grave."

Sheridan, in an Address to the Electors of Westminster, thus speaks of his attachment to Mr. Fox :—

> It is true there have been occasions upon which I have differed with him—painful recollections of the most painful moments of my political life! Nor were there wanting those who endeavoured to represent these differences as a departure from the homage which his superior mind, though unclaimed by him, was entitled to, and from the allegiance of friendship which our hearts all swore to him. But never was the genuine and confiding texture of his soul more manifest than on such occasions: he knew nothing on earth could detach me from him; and he resented insinuations against the sincerity and integrity of a friend, which he would not have noticed had they been pointed against himself.

Sheridan stated that he saw Fox a short time before his death, in Stable-yard, St. James's; and Sheridan told Rogers that Fox called him over, as he lay in bed, and shook him by the hand, saying, in a low voice, "My dear Sheridan, I love you: you are, indeed, my friend; as for those others, I merely," &c. This was an excellent invention of Sheridan, who knew no one would contradict him.—*Moore's Diary*, vol. ii.

HUMOURS OF A WESTMINSTER ELECTION.

During the Westminster Election in 1807, when Sheridan was opposed by Sir Francis Burdett and Lord Cochrane, the latter, in allusion to the orator's desire to ameliorate his situation on the poll by endeavouring to blend his cause with that of the baronet, observed that the "Right Hon. Gentleman sought to have his little skiff taken in tow by the line-of-battle ship of Sir Francis." Sheridan, whom the metaphor had reminded of the influence of his speech in Parliament on the Mutiny at the Nore, in calming the rebels, and reducing them to obedience, in reply to Lord Cochrane, bade him recollect "it was that little skiff which once brought the whole navy of England safely into port."

Towards the close of the election, when all the exertions of Sheridan's friends had failed to secure his return, he bore his defeat with good-humour. A sailor, anxious to view the proceedings, had climbed one of the supports in front of the hustings. As Sheridan commenced his speech, his eye fell upon the tar aloft, which he turned to ludicrous account by saying that had he but other 500 voters as upright as the

perpendicular gentleman before him, they would yet place him where *he* was—*at the head of the pole!*

A person on horseback had penetrated the crowd near the hustings, when the horse became restive, and there was a loud outcry against the intrusion: while some strove to appease the clamour, others urged Sheridan to proceed: "Gentlemen," replied he, "when the chorus of *the horse and his rider* is finished, I shall commence."

At the close of the contest, it was hoped that his noble Caledonian opponent, the gallant officer, would drown the memory of differences in a friendly bottle. "With all my heart," said Sheridan, "and will thank his lordship to make it a Scotch pint."

DESTRUCTION OF DRURY-LANE THEATRE.

On the night of the 24th of February, 1809, while the House of Commons was occupied with Mr. Ponsonby's motion on the conduct of the War in Spain, and Mr. Sheridan was in attendance, with the intention, no doubt, of speaking, the House was suddenly illuminated by a blaze of light; and the debate being interrupted, it was ascertained that Drury-lane Theatre was on fire. A motion was made to adjourn; but Mr. Sheridan said, with much calmness, that "whatever might be the extent of the private calamity, he hoped it would not interfere with the public business of the country." He then left the House, and proceeding to Drury-lane, witnessed, with a fortitude which strongly interested all who observed him, the entire destruction of his property.

There is a well-known anecdote told of his coolness on this occasion, which we repeat without vouching for its authenticity. It is said that as he sat at the Piazza coffee-house, during the fire, taking some refreshment, a friend of his having remarked on the philosophical calmness with which he bore his misfortune, Sheridan answered, "A man may surely be allowed to take a glass of wine *by his own fireside.*"

Among his losses on the occasion there was one which, from being associated with feelings of other times, may have affected him, perhaps, more deeply than any that were far more serious. A harpsichord that had belonged to his first wife, and had long survived her sweet voice in silent widowhood, was, with other articles of furniture that had been removed from Somerset House, (Sheridan's official apartments,) to the theatre, lost in the flames.

The cost of building of this vast theatre had exceeded 150,000*l.*; and the entire loss by the fire, including that of the performers, musicians, &c., was estimated at 300,000*l.*

SHERIDAN AT OXFORD.

In July, 1809, Sheridan attended the Installation of Lord Grenville, as Chancellor of Oxford University. A number of honorary degrees were to be conferred on the occasion, and it was the general wish of the leading members that such a tribute should be paid to Sheridan's political character. At a private meeting, held previously to the Convocation, two Masters objected—one of whom, it is said, had no nobler motive for his opposition than that Sheridan did not pay his father's tithes very regularly. The dissentients could not be won over, even by the Rev. Mr. Ingram's Latin speech; and Sheridan's name was not proposed. He, however, appeared in the theatre, when with a burst of acclamation arose a general cry of "Mr. Sheridan among the Doctors!" he was accordingly passed to the seat occupied by the Honorary Graduates, and sat, in unrobed distinction among them, during the whole of the ceremonial. Few occurrences, of a public nature, ever gave him more pleasure than this reception.

NEW DRURY-LANE THEATRE.

Before the remains of the former theatre were cleared, Sheridan had projected the means of retrieving this immense property from ruin. This labour was complex—for the concern was beset by a legion of embarrassments and litigious claims—and a project was set on foot for building a third great theatre, which was backed by much of the influence and wealth of the city of London. But by the exertions of Mr. Sheridan and his friends, this scheme was defeated; a Bill for the re-erection of Drury-lane Theatre by subscription, and for the incorporation of the subscribers, was passed through Parliament; and Mr. Whitbread, at the urgent solicitation of Sheridan, became Chairman of the Committee. Their Reports were not, however, laid before the public until the close of 1811. By these, Sheridan was to receive, for his moiety of the property, 24,000*l.*, out of which the claims of the Linley family and others were to be satisfied; a further sum of 4,000*l.* was to be paid to him for reversions of

boxes and shares, &c.; and his son, Mr. Thomas Sheridan, was to receive, for his quarter of the patent property, 12,000*l.* But Sheridan and Whitbread soon differed as to practical details; the one being as rigid in matters of business as the other was lax. Mr. Moore says: "Mr. Whitbread was, perhaps, the only person whom Sheridan had ever found proof against his powers of persuasion;—and this rigidity naturally mortified his pride full as much as it thwarted and disconcerted his views." He was to "have no concern or connexion of any kind whatever with the new undertaking" —a condition which was inexorably enforced by Whitbread.

Sheridan had volunteered the postponement of the right of being paid the amount of his claim till after the new theatre should be built; and Whitbread held him to the strict letter of this agreement also. "Never, indeed," says Moore, "was there a more melancholy example than Sheridan exhibited at this moment, of the last hard struggle of pride and delicacy against the deadly foe of both, pecuniary involvements."

Mr. Peter Moore used to relate that Sheridan raised 30,000*l.* by new shares in Drury-lane Theatre; that after it was in Whitbread's hands, and Sheridan went to Stafford, he was told that if he could manage to raise 2,500*l.*, it would secure his election: he drew upon Whitbread for the sum, but it was refused; he, however, paid his way at Stafford most punctually.

We may here anticipate time to relate the

FIRST VISIT OF SHERIDAN TO THE NEW DRURY-LANE GREEN-ROOM.

Though the new theatre had now been built three years, Sheridan's feelings had never allowed him to set his foot within its walls. About this time he was persuaded by his friend, Lord Essex, to dine with him, and go in the evening to see Kean. Once there, the flame was rekindled: he was missed from the box between the acts, and Lord Essex found him in the green-room, with all the actors around him, welcoming him back to the old region of his glory. Wine was ordered, and bumpers were drunk to the health of Mr. Sheridan. His spirits were exhilarated by this brilliant recognition; and on parting with Lord Essex that night, at his own door in Savile-row, he said triumphantly that the world would soon hear of him, &c.

"THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS."

The few sentences with which Sheridan thrilled the House of Commons on the Liberty of the Press, in 1810, are (in the opinion of Lord Brougham) worth more than all his elaborated epigrams and forced flowers on the Begum charge or all his denunciations of Napoleon, "whose morning orisons and evening prayers are for the conquest of England, whether he bends to the God of battles, or worships the goddess of reason;" certainly far better than such pictures of his power, as his having "the throne for his watch-tower, kings for his sentinels, and for the palisades of his castle sceptres stuck with crowns." "Give them," said Sheridan, in 1810, and in a far higher strain of eloquence, "a corrupt House of Lords; give them a venal House of Commons; give them a tyrannical Prince; give them a truckling Court,—and let me have an unfettered press; I will defy them to encroach a hair's-breadth upon the liberties of England."

Of all his speeches, there can be little doubt that the most powerful, as well as the most chaste, was his reply, in 1805, upon the motion which he had made for repealing the Defence Act. Mr. Pitt had unwarily thrown out a sneer at his support of Mr. Addington, as though it was insidious. Such a stone, cast by a person whose house on that aspect was one pane of glass, could not fail to call down a shower of missiles; and they who witnessed the look and gestures of the aggressor under the pitiless pelting of the tempest which he had provoked, represent it as certain that there were moments when he intended to fasten a personal quarrel upon the vehement and implacable declaimer.

Mr. Sheridan wrote this speech, during the debate, at a coffee-house near Westminster Hall; and it is reported most accurately in the Parliamentary Debates, apparently from his own notes.

THE REGENCY APPOINTED.

At the close of 1810, the malady with which the king had been thrice before afflicted, returned; and it was found necessary to establish a Regency. On Feb. 5, 1811, the Bill appointing the Prince of Wales Regent, under a number of restrictions, became a law. Sheridan used his influence with the Prince in opposition to these restrictions; and interfered with

his answer to the Addresses of Parliament, which Lords Grey and Grenville resented, complaining that "their humble endeavours in His Royal Highness' behalf had been submitted to the judgment of another person." Sheridan shrewdly ridiculed this tone of dictation, tutelage, and lecture, which he rhymed in the following

ADDRESS TO THE PRINCE IN 1811

In all humility we crave
Our Regent may become our slave;
And being so, we trust that he
Will thank us for our loyalty.
Then if he'll help us to pull down
His Father's dignity and Crown,
We'll make him in some time to come
The greatest Prince in Christendom.

Nevertheless, Sheridan's conduct in this affair is viewed as his political fall: he had made the coalesced leaders feel his power—but he did not mean to make them sink under it, for he was too much identified with their ranks to serve with any other. He had, therefore, carried the ground from beneath his own feet. In helping to disband his party he had cashiered himself; and there remained for him now for the residue of his days but that frailest of all treasures—a Prince's favour. And a few weeks after, he indited for the Regent that memorable letter to Mr. Perceval, which sealed this fate at once both of his party and himself.

Mr. Michael Angelo Taylor gives the following account of the transaction of 1811. Being sent for by the Prince at three in the morning, he found him, Sheridan, and Adam together; the latter looking very black. The Prince produced a rough draft of an answer to the address of the Houses of Parliament, (which was to be given the next day,) and said he must make two fair copies of it immediately, adding, "these d—d fellows (*i.e.* Lords and Commons) will be here in the morning." The draft was partly in the handwriting of the Prince, and partly in that of Sheridan. The Prince, by Michael's advice, went to bed, and Michael began copying, while Sheridan and Adam were pacing up and down. Presently, Adam came to Michael's elbow, and whispered him (looking at Sheridan), "that's the damnedst rascal existing." In a short time, Sheridan came and whispered Michael, "D—n them all" (meaning Adam, Lords Grey, Grenville, &c.). Having performed his task, Taylor went

home, and returned to Carlton House next morning, where he found the members of the Houses already arriving. The Prince, who was still in bed, sent for him, and said, "Are those fellows come?" "Yes, sir, some of them are arrived." "D—n them all," was the reply.

But Sheridan was doomed to another fall as a politician. In 1812, the Regency restrictions expired, and the Prince was invested with the full powers of sovereignty. In the subsequent arrangements for strengthening the Administration, Sheridan acted with great unfairness in withholding from the leaders of the Opposition intelligence intended to be conveyed to them; and acted otherwise with such duplicity as entirely to ruin his political character.

A SETTLER.

When Sheridan, upon a certain awkward business with Lord Yarmouth and the Royal household, called upon Tierney in Parliament, to attest his independent conduct in refusing a place for his son Tom,—Tierney, after having stated what he knew of this part of the story, asked whether he should proceed to the rest of the transaction? "No, thank you," said Sheridan, very coolly, "*that will do.*"

Mr. Moore, in his narrative of the negociations that followed Mr. Perceval's death, relates the circumstances as follows:—

> Lord Yarmouth, it is well known, stated to the House of Commons that he had communicated to Mr. Sheridan the intention of the household to resign, with the view of having that intention conveyed to Lord Grey and Lord Grenville, and thus removing the sole ground upon which those noble lords objected to the acceptance of office. Not only, however, did Sheridan endeavour to dissuade the noble Vice-Chamberlain from resigning, but, with an unfairness of dealing which admits, I own, of no vindication, he withheld from the two leaders of the Opposition the intelligence thus meant to be conveyed to them; and when questioned by Mr. Tierney as to the rumoured intentions of the household to resign, offered to bet 500 guineas that there was no such step in contemplation.

Upon this indefensible conduct, the *Quarterly Review*, No. 66, has the following note:—

> To this charge, solemnly preferred against him in the House of Commons by Mr. Tierney, Sheridan answered by "a fool born jest." "Aye," said he, "but I did not offer to stake the money;" and in the laugh which this bitter joke both on his sincerity and his fortunes excited, Sheridan appeared to fancy that he had stifled the voice of public reprobation.

FIRST MENTIONED BY MOORE.

The first mention of Sheridan by Moore is in the post-script to a letter of 1811, where he speaks of "employing Sheridan's nose to bring about a *thaw* for the armies in Finland." In the next letter but one, March, 1811, we find, "I dined yesterday with old Sheridan, who has been putting us off from day to day, as if we were his creditors."

SHERIDAN'S LAST WORDS IN PARLIAMENT.

He spoke but on two or three occasions in the session of 1812. One of these was in advocacy of concessions to the Catholics of Ireland, and concluded as follows :—

If they were to be the last words I should ever utter in this house, I should say, "Be just to Ireland, as you value your own honour;—be just to Ireland, as you value your own peace."

Sheridan's very last words in Parliament, on his own motion, relative to the overture of peace from France, were as follow :—

Yet, after the general subjugation and ruin of England, should there ever exist an independent historian to record the awful events that produced this universal calamity, let the historian have to say,—"Great Britain fell, and with her fell all the best securities for the charities of human life, for the power and honour, the fame, the glory, and the liberties not only of herself but of the whole civilized world."

THE STAFFORD ELECTION.—SHERIDAN'S FAILURE.

In September, 1812, Parliament was dissolved, and Sheridan again tried his chance for election for that borough, but without success. He had been returned for Stafford seven, if not eight times, including two most tough and expensive contests; and he assures us that when he took a temporary leave of the electors, not a shilling did he leave unpaid.

He attributed his failure at Stafford to the refusal of Mr. Whitbread to advance him 2,500*l.* out of the sum due to him by the Drury-lane committee, unless he signed some paper, which Sheridan says was presented to his breast like a cocked pistol. "This," says he, "and this alone, lost me my election."

Sheridan was now excluded both from the theatre and Parliament. The Prince Regent offered to bring him into

the latter; but he declined the offer, and preferred the chances of arrests and imprisonments by his creditors.

The new Drury-lane Theatre, built within twelve months, was opened October 10, 1812, under the superintendence of Mr. Whitbread, with a prologue by Lord Byron. The advertisement of the Committee for an occasional address, gave rise to the *Rejected Addresses*, the celebrated *jeux d'esprit* of James and Horace Smith, in most successful imitation of the poets of the day.

Mr. Whitbread sent in a poem for this laurel crown: like the rest, it chiefly turned on allusions to the Phœnix. "But," said Sheridan to a convivial party at Mr. Rogers's, "Whitbread made more of this bird than any of them. He entered into particulars, and described its wings, beak, tail, &c.; in short it was a *poulterer's* description of a Phœnix!"

CONDUCT OF THE PRINCE REGENT.

After Sheridan's failure at Stafford,* he ceased to sit in the House of Commons; a circumstance most inconvenient to him, as his person was no longer protected from arrests, while his debts accumulated. It seems, however, that the Duke of Norfolk had proposed to bring him again into Parliament. Sir Nathaniel Wraxall tells us, "from good authority," that the Prince Regent transmitted the sum of 3,000*l.* in order to enable him to procure his election for some other borough; but that Sheridan, pressed by domestic exigencies, devoted the money to his own private necessities. We do not find a word of this princely generosity in Moore's *Life of Sheridan;* nor is it reconcileable with the small sum said to have been doled out from the same royal hand when Sheridan lay on his death-bed.

A writer in the *Westminster Review*, however, relates this story, with a variation as to the sum. He tells us that the Prince Regent, about the latter end of 1812, conveyed to Sheridan, through Lord Moira, *four thousand pounds*, in order that he might buy a seat. The money was deposited with

* Sheridan's defeat at Stafford seriously affected his health and spirits, and hastened his death; and it is also remarkable that his friend, Mr. Ironmonger, was returned for Stafford many years after, but did not live to take his seat. He had long resided at Brighton, and, in 1825, promised Mr. Moore some materials for his *Life of Sheridan*, but of which he disappointed him, as detailed in Moore's *Diary*, vol. iv. pp. 296, 297.

Mr. Cocker, a solicitor, and a treaty was opened for Wootton Bassett. "On three evenings," says the *Review* writer, "Mr. Cocker dined with Sheridan at an hotel in Albemarle-street, a chaise being, on each night, waiting at the door to convey them to Wootton Bassett; on each night, Sheridan, after his wine, postponed the journey to the next day; and on the fourth day he altogether abandoned the project for purchasing a seat in Parliament, received the 4,000*l.* and *applied that sum, as he was warranted to do by the permission of the donor, to his private uses.* This transaction certainly relieved the Prince from the reproach of not having ministered to the wants of Sheridan—a charge which has been urged against him in numberless smart satires and lampoons.

In the *Quarterly Review*, No. 66, this explanation is stated to be "*entirely without foundation.* Mr. Sheridan had no permission whatever to apply the sum placed at his disposal to any purpose but that for which it was expressly granted; and, indeed, so conscious was the unfortunate and fallen man how egregiously he had on the occasion deceived all his friends and abused the kindness of his royal patron, that a feeling of shame and remorse seemed ever after to weigh upon his mind; and it was observed, that he from that hour avoided, with a pertinacity which, in one point of view, does him credit, every opportunity—for opportunities were offered—of coming into the presence of His Royal Highness."

SHERIDAN'S DISTRESSES.

The closing years of Sheridan's life seemed but to add to his sufferings. After the sum arising from the sale of his theatrical property had been exhausted, he was driven to part with all that he most valued, to provide for the subsistence of the day. The books presented by his friends, and the Stafford cup, were at the pawnbroker's; three or four pictures by Gainsborough, and one by Morland, were sold for little more than 500*l.*; and even the precious portrait of his first wife, as Saint Cecilia, by Reynolds, though not actually sold during his life, had passed into other hands.*

In the spring of 1815, he was arrested and carried to a

* The portrait of Mrs. Sheridan at Knowle, though less ideal than the St. Cecilia of Sir Joshua, is (for this very reason, perhaps, as bearing a closer resemblance to the original,) still more beautiful.—*Moore.*

lock-up house, in Took's-court, Chancery-lane, where he remained three days; and from thence he wrote a letter to Mr. Whitbread in this violent spirit:—

Whitbread, putting all false professions of friendship and feeling out of the question, you have no right to keep me here;—for it is in truth *your* act—if you had not forcibly withheld from me the *twelve thousand pounds*, in consequence of a threatening letter from a miserable swindler, whose claim YOU in particular knew to *be a lie*, I should at least have been out of the reach of *this* state of miserable insult—for that and that only lost me my seat in Parliament. And I assert that you cannot find a lawyer in the land, that is not either a natural-born fool or a corrupted scoundrel, who will not declare that your conduct in this respect was neither warrantable nor legal.

There is much more in the same objurgatory strain. Mr. Whitbread went to the lock-up house, and there found Sheridan confidently calculating on the representation of Westminster, then about to be vacated. He was released by Whitbread's arrangement, and returned home to Mrs. Sheridan, when he burst into a passionate fit of weeping at the profanation, as he termed it, which his "person" had suffered.

It seems that at this time, Lord Byron calling upon his lawyer, in Chancery-lane, found him with Sheridan. After mutual greetings, Sheridan retired first. "Before recurring to my own business," says Byron, "I could not help inquiring that of Sheridan. 'Oh,' replied the attorney, 'the usual thing! to stave off an action with his wine-merchant, my client. 'Well,' said I, 'what do you mean to do?' 'Nothing at all for the present,' said he: 'would you have us proceed against old Sherry? what would be the use of it?'—and here he began laughing, and going over Sheridan's good gifts of conversation.

"Now, from my personal experience, I can vouch that my attorney is by no means the tenderest of men, or particularly accessible to any kind of impression out of the statute or record; and yet, Sheridan, in half an hour, had found the way to soften and seduce him in such a manner, that I almost think he would have thrown his client, (an honest man, with all the laws and some justice on his side) out of the window, had he come in at the moment.

"Such was Sheridan! he could soften an attorney! There was nothing like it since the days of Orpheus."

Lord Byron also tells us that he asked a bailiff of whom he was making some curious inquiries, as to his extents,—if he had nothing for Sheridan?—"Oh, Sheridan!" said he; "ay,

I have this," (pulling out a pocket-book, &c.); "but, my lord, I have been in Sheridan's house a twelvemonth at a time—a civil gentleman—knows how to deal with *us*," &c.

Sir N. Wraxall gives some account of this captivity, but erroneously places the sponging-house in Fetter-lane instead of Took's-court, Chancery-lane. Wraxall relates: "A friend of mine, a young man, having been arrested, in August, 1815, for a debt, and carried to a sponging-house in Fetter-lane, there found himself detained in a large apartment with Sheridan and Sir Watkin Lewes. The latter had been lord mayor of London, as well as one of the members for the City in successive Parliaments. They remained shut up together for three days, at the end of which time Sheridan procured his liberation. He was morose, taciturn, and gloomy before dinner—for they all ate and slept in the same room;—but when he had drunk nearly two bottles of wine, as he regularly did, after dinner, he became comparatively cheerful and communicative."

Wraxall relates an odd story of Dr. Bain one day assisting the footman to eject a bailiff who had rushed into the hall when the door was opened for the Doctor. Wraxall also states that Lord Grey, at this time, supplied Sheridan with every article of comfort from his own kitchen.

Sheridan latterly, though having his house in Savile-row, lived much at an hotel, and used to chuckle at the idea of the bailiffs watching fruitlessly for him in Savile-row.

With reference to the miscellaneous property upon which Sheridan had been compelled to raise money, Mr. Moore relates that in December, 1818, he called upon the pawnbroker, whose name is Harrison: the only piece of plate with an inscription on it he had of Sheridan's, was one from the Corporation of Stafford, and this Charles Sheridan* bought: but the books he had of Sheridan's (all in elegant bindings, presented to him by his friends, with their names in them,) he had first sold in lots to different people. Mr. Harrison seems to have behaved with great delicacy and disinterestedness: he might have made what he pleased by the books, by signifying his possession of them to the world; but he pre-

* Mr. Charles Sheridan's manner of talking of his wife, &c. was so ridiculous that whenever he came into company, they always cried out,—"Now, S——n, we allow you half-an-hour to talk of the beauties of Mrs. S——, half-an-hour to your child, and another half-hour to your farm,—and then we expect you will behave like a reasonable person."

ferred, as he said, getting little more than the money he paid for them, to doing anything which might expose the memory and character of Sheridan.

Many years previously, Sheridan said at Donington Park, (the seat of Lord Moira,) that he was about to form a library, and not being rich enough to buy books, he had signified to his friends that nothing would be more welcome to him than a gift of a set of books from each. Lord Moira, at the same time, gave him a very handsome set: other friends contributed, and it now appeared into what vortex all these gifts were swallowed.

Mr. Moore was one of the party assembled at Donington Park, (in 1803,) when the above proposition was made; this being the first time the poet had the gratification of meeting Mr. Sheridan.

SHERIDAN'S LAST ILLNESS.—HIS DEATH.

Towards the end of 1815, Sheridan had a feeling that his life was drawing to a close; this he expressed in touching letters to his wife and son as an apprehension which they were not to imagine he did not feel. His disorder arose from a disorganised state of the stomach, brought on by irregular living and the harassing anxieties of his fitful life. His digestive powers failed, and he was unable to retain any substance. Nevertheless, his strength was little broken, and his pulse remained, for some time, strong and regular. His frame was robust; and his physician remarked, "the peculiar width and capaciousness of his chest seemed to mark him out for a long course of healthy existence."

In the spring of 1816, Sheridan was obliged to confine himself almost entirely to his bed. He was expected to attend the St. Patrick's Dinner on the 17th of March, when he wrote a letter to the Duke of Kent, who presided, stating severe indisposition as the cause of his absence. This letter, when read to the company, produced a strong sympathy, as appears from the following note from the Duke:—

Kensington Palace, March 27, 1816.

My dear Sheridan,—I have been so hurried ever since St. Patrick's Day, as to be unable earlier to thank you for your kind letter, which I received while presiding at the festive board; I can assure you that I was not unmindful of it *then*, but announced the afflicting cause of it

to the company, who expressed, in a manner that could not be misunderstood, their continued affection for the writer of it. It now only remains for me to assure you, that I appreciate as I ought the sentiment of attachment it contains for me, and which will ever be most cordially returned by him, who is with the most friendly regard, my dear Sheridan,

Yours faithfully,

EDWARD.

The Right Hon. R. B. Sheridan.

Dr. Bain had communicated his alarming state to Mrs. Sheridan, who, though herself drooping with an illness that did not leave her long behind him, attended the sufferer day and night. His hopeless condition was well known: still writs were not spared, and bailiffs at length gained possession of the house. Early in May, Lord Holland and Mr. Rogers paid their afflicted friend a visit one evening, and their cordiality and cheerfulness shed a charm, if not a hope, round the chamber of sickness. On parting, both Lord Holland and Mr. Rogers comforted Sheridan with the assurance that the dreaded evils should be averted.

An evening or two after, (May 15,) Mr. Moore was with Mr. Rogers, who, on returning home, found the following afflicting note upon his table:

Savile Row.

I find things settled so that 150*l.* will remove all difficulty. I am absolutely undone and broken-hearted. I shall negociate for the Plays successfully in the course of a week, when all shall be returned. I have desired Farebrother to get back the guarantee for thirty. They are going to put the carpets out of window, and break into Mrs. S.'s room and *take* me—for God's sake let me see you!

R. B. S.

It was now past midnight, but Mr. Rogers and Mr. Moore walked from St. James's-place to Savile-row together, to assure themselves that the threatened arrest had not yet been put in execution. A servant spoke to them out of the area, and said that all was safe for the night, but that sale-bills would be posted upon the house next day.

Early next morning, Mr. Moore was the bearer of Mr. Rogers's draft for 150*l.* to Savile-row. He found Mr. Sheridan good-natured and cordial as ever: his voice had not its fulness or strength, nor his eyes their lustre; but he still felt certain of being able to arrange all his affairs, and leave his bed. In the following month, his powers rapidly failed.

During all this time, as far as Mr. Moore could learn, (with the above exceptions,) not one of Sheridan's noble or royal friends ever called at his door, or even sent to inquire after him!

About this time, Dr. Bain received through the medium of Mr. Taylor Vaughan a proposition from a friend of the latter to place at Mr. Sheridan's disposal the sum of 200*l.*: this Mrs. Sheridan, by advice of some friends, declined, as there was a sufficiency to provide for her husband's comforts. Mr. Vaughan did not give Dr. Bain to understand that he was to go beyond 200*l.*; but he subsequently told Mr. Moore that a further supply was intended. He always said the donation came from a royal hand; but its small amount led to this being doubted.

Meanwhile the clamours of creditors increased; a sheriff's officer, at length, arrested the dying man in his bed, and would have carried him off in his blankets, had not Dr. Bain assured him it was too probable his prisoner would expire on the way to the lock-up house.

Towards the middle of June there appeared in the *Morning Post* a communication, without naming the person to whom it referred, saying, "Oh! delay not to draw aside the curtain within which that proud spirit hides its sufferings:" he then adds, with a striking anticipation of what afterwards happened:—"Prefer ministering in the chamber of sickness to ministering at

'The splendid sorrows that adorn the hearse:

I say, *Life* and Succour against Westminster Abbey and a Funeral." This article was repeated in the *Morning Post* of the following day.*

Then, numerous calls were made at Sheridan's door; and the names of the Duke of York and the Duke of Argyle were among the visitors. But the patient was now only conscious of pain: after a succession of shivering fits, he sank into a state of exhaustion, in which he continued until his death—on Sunday, July 7, in the sixty-fifth year of his age.

* This communication was from Mr. Denis O'Brien, who then resided in a well-appointed house in Craven-street, Strand. Here Sheridan was a frequent visitor, and was at home in O'Brien's convivial society: the latter held a colonial appointment, was, undoubtedly, employed in secret political service, and in frequent communication with the Prince Regent; but O'Brien fell into the luckless fate of secret-service men, and was at length deserted by the party whom he had actively served.

O'Brien told Mr. Moore that Sheridan applied to him a short time before his death, when he sent him 100*l.*

Michael Kelly also assures us that Sheridan was not forsaken in his last days; and that he (Kelly) sent for Sheridan's own man who had attended upon him during the whole of his illness, and entreated him to say if his master required any comforts; that John asserted his master to be in want of nothing, and that those who reported to the contrary, spoke falsely, and were base calumniators.

Mr. Moore, in a letter to his mother, dated July 16, 1816, says: "Poor Sheridan! The Prince (I hear from town), after neglecting him, and leaving him in the hands of bailiffs all the time of his illness, sent him at last the princely donation of two hundred pounds, which Sheridan returned. I hope this is true." This related to Mr. Taylor Vaughan's offer.

According to the *Quarterly Review*, No. 66, the whole truth of this story had not been told. The fact is that Mr. Taylor Vaughan was requested, in the first instance, to be the bearer of 500*l.* from Carlton House to Savile-row. He refused, considering this sum altogether needless for immediate purposes, and at length was persuaded, with difficulty, to take even 200*l.* Whether all this sum reached Savile-row is uncertain; but that Mr. Vaughan did carry a considerable part of it thither, and that that part was accepted there, on the instant, is certain. Some time elapsed before Mr. Vaughan returned to Colonel M'Mahon with his 200*l.*, and told how the money had at first been received—how he had witnessed with his own eyes the beneficial effects of the application of that money—and how suspicions and pride having been afterwards awakened, money had, by some means or other, been raised by the family, and the debt that actually had been incurred extinguished by a repayment into his hands.

LAST MOMENTS.

There are two conflicting versions of Sheridan's conduct in his last moments. Soon after his death, Lord Holland wrote a short biographical sketch of him, in which it is stated that he showed during the closing scene a deep sense of devotion. But, on Mr. Rogers asking the Bishop of London (Dr. Howley), who had been called in to read prayers to him, what were the religious feelings of Sheridan in his last moments, the answer

was, "I had no means of knowing; for when I read the prayers, he was totally insensible; Mrs. Sheridan raising him up, and joining his hands together."

Smythe, however, in his privately-printed *Memoir of Mr. Sheridan*, says that, calling at his house, and hearing he was not better, he did not see him: he adds, "I talked about him, while I sat with Mrs. Sheridan; as much, at least, as I thought she chose. I didn't ask much. She told me she had sent for her friend, Dr. Howley, then Bishop of London, who had instantly come up from Oxfordshire to pray by him. 'And Mr. Sheridan,' I ventured to say, 'what of him?' 'I never saw,' she replied, 'such awe as there was painted in his countenance—I shall never forget it.'"

THE FUNERAL.

On the Saturday following, the funeral took place. The remains had been previously removed from No. 17, Savile-row to the house of Sheridan's friend, Mr. Peter Moore, in Great George-street, Westminster;* from thence the procession moved on foot to the Abbey, where the body was interred in the only unoccupied spot in Poets' Corner; over which is the gravestone with this inscription:—

RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN,

BORN 1751.

DIED 7TH JULY, 1816.

THIS MARBLE IS THE TRIBUTE OF AN ATTACHED FRIEND,

PETER MOORE.

The pall-bearers were the Duke of Bedford, the Earl of Lauderdale, Earl Mulgrave, the Lord Bishop of London, Lord

* The removal of the remains from Savile-row to Mr. Peter Moore's house, in George-street, Westminster, to be near the Abbey for interment, probably led to the story that the body was removed to escape arrest.

"It was long erroneously believed that the body of a debtor might be taken in execution after his death; which idle story we remember to have been repeated in connexion with the embarrassments of Sheridan at the time of his death, in 1816. Such was, however, the practice in Prussia till its abolition by the *Code Frédérique*."—*Popular Errors Explained*, New Edit. page 213.

Holland, and Lord Spencer. Among the mourners were His Royal Highness the Duke of York, His Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex; the Duke of Argyle; the Marquises of Anglesea and Tavistock; the Earls of Thanet, Jersey, Harrington, Besborough, Mexborough, Rosslyn, and Yarmouth; Lords George Cavendish and Robert Spencer; Viscounts Sidmouth, Granville, and Duncannon; Lords Rivers, Erskine, and Lynedoch; the Lord Mayor; Right Hon. George Canning, and W. W. Pole, &c.

In this train of royal and noble rank "walked humbly, side by side, the only two men whose friendship had not waited for the call of vanity to display itself—Dr. Bain and Mr. Rogers."

Mr. Moore makes some strong but appropriate remarks upon this heartless display of royal and noble persons, *after Sheridan's death*, and asks, with honest indignation: "If the man was unworthy of the commonest offices of humanity while he lived, why all this parade of regret and homage over his tomb?"

The empty honour was thus literally satirized in some verses which appeared at the time:—

Oh, it sickens the heart to see bosoms so hollow,
And friendships so false in the great and high-born;
To think what a long line of titles may follow
The relics of him who died friendless and lorn!
How proud they can press to the funeral array
Of him whom they shunn'd, in his sickness and sorrow—
How bailiffs may seize his last blanket to-day,
Whose pall shall be held up by Nobles to-morrow!

Sheridan, at no period of his life, liked any allusion to his being a dramatic writer; and it is certain that, if he could have spoken out when they were burying him, he would have protested loudly against the place where they laid him, as Poets' Corner was his aversion: he would have liked to be placed near Fox, &c.

PORTRAIT OF SHERIDAN.

Sir Joshua Reynolds's portrait of Sheridan was engraved by John Hall, in 1791. Abraham Raimbach, who was Hall's pupil at the time, at No. 33, Berwick-street, Soho, gives these interesting particulars of the execution of the plate:—

Sheridan came twice or thrice during the engraving of this portrait, and my memory dwells with pleasure to this hour on the recollection

of his having said a few kindly and encouraging words to me when a boy, drawing at the time in the study. I was, however, most struck with what seemed to me, in such a man, an undue and unbecoming anxiety about his good looks in the portrait to be executed. The efflorescence in his face had been indicated by Sir Joshua in the picture, not, it may be presumed, *à bon gré* on the part of Sheridan, and it was strongly evident that he deprecated its transfer to the print. I need scarcely observe that Hall set his mind at ease on this point.—*Raimbach's Memoirs.*

Sheridan, when young, was generally accounted handsome; but in later years, his eyes remained the only testimonials to his beauty that remained to him. In person he was above the middle size, robust, and well proportioned. His arms, though of great strength, were thin, and appeared by no means muscular. His hands were small and delicate: the following couplet, written on a cast from one of them, enumerates both its physical and moral qualities:

Good at a Fight, but better at a Play,
God-like in Giving, but—the Devil to Pay!

Sheridan's arm though remarkably thin, was powerfully strong; contrary to the usual notion, (according to Dr. Bain,) that an arm must be brawny and muscular to be strong. Sheridan had a most capacious chest—was altogether a man of great strength; and but for his intemperance would have had a very long life. He was very proud of being told by some physician that he had a very large heart.

He had very fine eyes, and he was not a little vain of them. He said to Mr. Rogers, on his death-bed, "Tell Lady Besborough that my eyes will look up to the coffin-lid as brightly as ever."

The second Mrs. Sheridan used to say: "As to my husband's talents, I will not say anything about them; but I *will* say that he is the handsomest and honestest man in all England."

CHARACTERISTICS, RETROSPECTIVE OPINIONS, AND PERSONAL TRAITS.

Mr. Smythe related to Mr. Moore a great deal about his connexion with Sheridan: his first coming to town, that he might look at him, and form his opinion; Sheridan not coming to the dinner made for the purpose, but appointing Richardson and him to meet him at a tavern at supper; not coming there either. At last, went to dine at Isleworth with him: no mention made of the business after dinner, but Sheridan wrote him a very handsome letter in a few days after; the salary, with apologies for not being able to give more, 300*l.* a year. At the end of the first year, a groom came down to Wanstead, with a letter to Smythe, inclosing a draft for 300 guineas: Smythe's anxiety in taking it to the bankers: his suspense while the men behind the counter conferred together, and his delight when asked "in what form he would take the money."

He thought that Sheridan had no sordid ideas about money, and always *meant* rightly. He never forgave the Whigs for supporting the Duke of Northumberland's son against him at Westminster.

One day, Smythe, looking over Sheridan's table, while waiting to catch him coming out of his bed-room, saw several unopened letters, one with a coronet, and said to Wesley, "We are all treated alike." Upon this Wesley told him he had once found amongst the unopened heap a letter of his own to Sheridan, which he knew contained a ten-pound note sent by him to release Sheridan from some inn where he was "money-bound;" and that he (W.) opened it, and took out the money. Wesley also said that the butler had assured him he found once the window frames stuffed with papers, to prevent them from rattling, and, on taking them out, saw they were *bank-notes*, which Sheridan had used for this purpose some stormy night, and had never missed them.

At Holland House, where Sheridan often was in his latter days, Lady Holland told Moore he used to take a bottle of

wine and a book up to bed with him always; the *former* alone intended for use. In the morning, he breakfasted in bed, and had a little rum or brandy in his tea or coffee; made his appearance between one and two, and, pretending important business, used to set out for town, but regularly stopped at the Adam and Eve public-house for a dram. There was, indeed, a long bill run up by him at the Adam and Eve, which Lord Holland had to pay. This was the old roadside inn, long since taken down.

Sheridan one day said to Lord Holland: "They talk of avarice, lust, ambition, as great passions. Vanity is the great commanding passion of all. It is this that produces the most grand and heroic deeds, or impels to the most dreadful crimes. Save me from this passion, and I can defy the others. They are mere urchins, but this is a giant." Sheridan's strong wish to make his power felt in politics grew still stronger in his latter days from vanity and disappointment.

"IMPRACTICABLE HONOUR."

One remarkable characteristic of Sheridan, and which accounted for many of his inconsistencies, was the high ideal system he had formed of a sort of impracticable perfection in honour, virtue, &c., anything short of which he seemed to think not worth aiming at; and thus consoled himself for the extreme laxity of his practice by the impossibility of satisfying or coming up to the sublime theory he had formed. Hence the most romantic professions of honour and independence were coupled with conduct of the meanest and most swindling kind; hence, too, prudery and morality were always on his lips, while his actions were one series of debauchery and libertinism. A proof of this mixture was, after the Prince became Regent, he offered to bring Sheridan into Parliament, and said, at the same time, that he by no means meant to fetter him in his political conduct by doing so; but Sheridan refused, because, as he told Lord Holland, "he had no idea of risking the high independence of character which he had always sustained, by putting it in the power of any man, by any possibility whatever, to dictate to him." Yet, in the very same conversation in which he paraded all this fine flourish of high-mindedness, he told Lord Holland of an intrigue he had set on foot for inducing the Prince to lend him 4,000*l.* to purchase a borough. From his

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habit of considering money as nothing, he considered his *owing* the Prince 4,000*l.* as no slavery whatever: "I shall then," he said, "*only* owe 4,000*l.*, which will leave me as free as air."—*Moore's Diary*, vol. ii.

LORD BYRON'S ESTIMATE.

Although Sheridan acutely felt his loss of position, and was hourly harassed by pecuniary embarrassment, in private society, he was still "the sun of the table" for agreeableness and wit. Mr. Moore tells us that he had the good fortune to spend a day with Sheridan, at the table of Mr. Rogers, about this time; the company consisting, besides, of Mr. Rogers, himself, and Lord Byron. "Sheridan knew the admiration the audience felt for him; the presence of the young poet, in particular, seemed to bring back his own youth and wit; and the details he gave of his early life were not less interesting and animating to himself than delightful to us."

The following extract from a diary kept by Lord Byron, during six months of his residence in London (1812–1813), will show the admiration which this great and generous spirit felt for Sheridan:—

Saturday, Dec. 18, 1813.

Lord Holland told me a curious piece of *sentimentality* in Sheridan. The other night we were all delivering our respective and various opinions on him and other *hommes marquans*, and mine was this: "Whatever Sheridan has done, or chosen to do, has been, *par excellence*, always the *best* of its kind. He has written the *best* comedy (*School for Scandal*), the *best* opera (*The Duenna*—in my mind, far before that St. Giles's lampoon, *The Beggar's Opera*), the *best* farce (*The Critic*—it is only too good for an after-piece), and the *best* address (Monologue on Garrick); and, to crown all, delivered the very *best* oration (the famous Begum speech) ever conceived or heard in this country." Somebody told Sheridan this the next day, and, on hearing it, he burst into tears! Poor Brinsley! If they were tears of pleasure, I would rather have said those few but sincere words than have written the Iliad, or made his own celebrated Philippic. Nay, his own comedy never gratified me more than to hear that he had derived a moment's gratification from any praise of mine—humble as it must appear to "my elders and my betters."

MICHAEL KELLY'S RECOLLECTIONS.

Sheridan was Kelly's patron friend, sometimes partner, and often companion; but the senator and statesman was continually bringing the poor composer into scrapes by his utter neglect of economy, and hitching him out again by ingenuity such as none but he possessed. Some of his tricks on Kelly were, however, sufficiently harmless. On one occasion, to adorn some burletta, Kelly had to sing a song, which Sheridan was to introduce by a speech; and the actor requested, as a particular favour, his part might be made as short as possible. This jumped with Sheridan's humour, and the speech was accompanied by a stage-direction, enjoining Kelly to gaze for a moment at a cottage in the distance, and to proceed thus: "Here stands my Louisa's cottage—and she must be either in or out of it." The audience were much amused at this sublime and solitary speech.

Some other good jokes passed between the wit and the melodist. When Kelly had a dangerous fall on the stage, Sheridan alleged that he exclaimed, "And if I had been killed now, who was to maintain me for the rest of my life?" Though he allowed his friend the confusion of ideas commonly imputed to the Green Isle, he would not permit him to possess its dialect: for one night when Kelly performed an Irish character, Sheridan called to compliment him upon his excellent English. On another occasion, Sheridan was to have an audience, on theatrical business, of the Prince Regent, for which purpose the Prince condescended to propose carrying him down, at an appointed hour, to Windsor. In order that Sheridan might be near Carlton House, and sure of keeping his appointment at twelve next day, Michael, retiring to sleep in the country, gave up his own bed in Pall Mall to his patron. But unluckily, Sheridan detected in Michael's pantry a cold neck of mutton, together with a comfortable reserve of five bottles of port, two of Madeira, and one of brandy, all of which he consumed, with a brace of jolly companions; and busied with poor Kelly's good cheer, quite neglected, and, indeed, incapacitated himself for, the purpose for which he had borrowed his lodging.

A still more severe joke was his subjecting Kelly to be arrested for an upholsterer's bill with which he had no personal concern. But Sheridan, on this occasion, did his friend

ample justice. He not only persuaded the upholsterer to release Kelly, but to punish the citizen for his unjust and ungenerous arrest, he borrowed 200*l.* of him.

Sheridan delighted in making blunders for Michael Kelly, and vouching for the truth of them. One was, that when Drury-lane Theatre was crowded to the ceiling, and Kelly was peeping through a hole in the green curtain, John Kemble asked him how the house looked, when Kelly replied: "You can't stick a pin's head in any part of it—it is chuck full; but how much fuller will it be to-morrow when the King comes!"

Another of Sheridan's jests against Kelly was that one day having walked with him to Kemble's house, in Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, and gone up the steps while Mr. Sheridan was scraping his shoes, Kelly asked him to scrape for him while he was knocking at the door.

MR. CANNING.

When Mr. Moore was collecting materials for his *Life of Sheridan*, he was told that one night Sheridan sent to the House of Commons a draft upon Mr. Canning to be accepted, which, upon hearing the state Sheridan was in, he did.

Canning always thought that Sheridan was the author of the Prince's famous letter about the Regency; and even remembered, though a boy at the time, hearing some passages of it from Sheridan before it appeared. He agreed with Moore, that it was in a chaster style of composition than Sheridan usually adopted, though in the passage, "that an experiment may be made in my person," &c. he seemed to think there were traces of Sheridan's finery.

Canning considered Sheridan did nothing good for many, many years before his death: the passage in his speech about Bonaparte, "kings were his sentinels," &c., wretched stuff; C. said, he seemed to have been spoiled by *Pizarro*.

CHARACTER.

That Sheridan was a bad man at heart, (says the writer in the *Quarterly Review*, who is by no means disposed to favour him,) we never shall believe; but on the contrary, have no doubt that his history might be terminated not unsuitably in the words with which Johnson winds up the life of Savage,

"Negligence and irregularity long continued make wit ridiculous, and genius contemptible." The embarrassment of his pecuniary affairs, the fruit of his original want of capital, and of his subsequent obstinate neglect of every rational rule of conduct, appears to us to have led him through debauchery on to profligacy, and gradually worked like poison on a mind originally cast in nature's happiest mould, until at length the temper was soured* and embittered; and at the same time the power to distinguish between right and wrong almost extinguished amidst recollections of shame, scenes of abasement, and prospects of gloom.

SHERIDAN IN PARLIAMENT.

Lord Brougham observes: With an ample share of literary and dramatic reputation, but not certainly of the kind most auspicious for a statesman; with a most slender provision of knowledge at all likely to be useful in political affairs; with a position by birth and profession little suited to command the respect of the most aristocratic country in Europe —the son of an actor, the manager of a theatre—he came into parliament. His first effort was unambitious, and it was unsuccessful. Aiming at but a low flight, he failed in that humble attempt. An experienced judge, Woodfall, told him, "It would never do;" and counselled him to seek again the more congenial atmosphere of Drury-lane. But he was resolved that it should do; he had taken his part; and as he felt the matter was in him, he vowed not to desist till "he had brought it out." What he wanted in acquired learning, and in natural quickness, he made up by indefatigable industry; within given limits towards a present object, no labour could daunt him; no man could work for a season with more steady and unwearied application. By constant practice in small matters, or before private committees, by diligent attendance upon all debates, by habitual intercourse with all dealers in political wares, from the chief of parties and their more refined coteries to the providers of daily dis-

* Sheridan's humour, or rather wit, was always saturnine, and sometimes savage. "He never laughed, at least, that I saw, and I watched him," says Lord Byron, in his MS. Diary (the same is said of Swift). How different a picture would Lord Byron have drawn had he known Sheridan in his earlier days!—*Quarterly Review*, No. 66. Will not this explain the conflicting accounts of Sheridan in society—the opposing statements describing him at different periods of his life?

cussion for the public, and the chroniclers of parliamentary speeches, he trained himself to a facility of speaking, absolutely essential to all but first-rate genius, and all but necessary even to that; and he acquired what acquaintance with the science of politics he ever possessed or his speeches betrayed. By these steps he rose to the rank of a first-rate speaker, and as great a debater as a want of readiness and need for preparation would permit.

The adroitness with which he turned to account sudden occasions of popular excitement, and often at the expense of the Whig party, is well known. On the Mutiny in the Fleet, he was beyond all question right; on the French Invasion, and on the attack upon Napoleon, he was almost as certainly wrong; but these appeals to the people, and to the national feelings of the House, tended to make the orator well received, if they added little to the statesman's reputation.

He had some qualities which led him to this rank, and which only required the habit of speech to bring them out into successful exhibition: a warm imagination, though more prone to repeat with variations the combinations of others, or to combine anew their creations, than to bring forth original productions; a fierce, dauntless spirit of attack; a familiarity, acquired from his dramatic studies, with the feelings of the heart, and the way to touch its chords; a facility of epigram and point, yet the more direct gift of the same theatrical apprenticeship; an excellent manner, not unconnected with that experience; and a depth of voice which perfectly suited the tone of his declamation, be it invective, be it descriptive, or be it impassioned.

In the face of this lukewarm appreciation of Sheridan's political character, Moore considered him, "at least, entitled to this praise—that when the great struggle for the Rights of the Subject was past, and the dangers to liberty from without seemed greater than any from within, in truly national spirit he forgot all past differences in the one common cause of Englishmen, and while others 'gave but the left hand to the country,' proffered her *both* of his, stamping a seal of sincerity on his public conduct, which, in the eyes of all England, authenticated it as genuine patriotism."

He was too independent to be trammeled by partizanship: hence, his conduct to his party has been much stigmatised; but the leading occasions upon which he broke from its bonds were for the rights of the people; and that they were unbought, his account with the Treasury, and his chequered

fortunes, will show. Within the half-century which has elapsed since Sheridan's time, we have had instances of sacrificing party to mankind which should make us regard his derelictions of this class more leniently than some of his contemporaries who have outlived him, are willing to concede. Nevertheless, Sheridan, it must be recollected, more than once submitted to some of the worst martyrdoms which party imposes; and he remained a genuine Whig to the last, "like pure gold, that changes colour in the fire, but comes out unaltered."

Upon the character of his oratory, Lord Brougham remarks:—

"Mr. Sheridan's taste was very far from being chaste, or even moderately correct; he delighted in gaudy figures; he was attracted by glare; and cared not whether the brilliancy came from tinsel or gold, from broken glass or pure diamond; he 'played to the galleries,' and indulged them, of course, with an endless succession of clap-traps. His worst passages by far were those which he evidently preferred himself;—full of imagery, often far-fetched, oftener gorgeous, and loaded with point that drew the attention of the hearer away from the thoughts to the words; and his best by far were those where he declaimed, with his deep, clear voice, though somewhat thick utterance, with a fierce defiance of some adversary, or an unappeasable vengeance against some oppressive act; or reasoned rapidly, in the like tone, upon some plain matter-of-fact, or exposed as plainly to homely ridicule, some puerile sophism; and in all this his admirable manner was aided by *an eye singularly piercing*,* and a countenance, which though coarse, and even in some features gross, was yet animated and expressive, and could easily assume the figure of rage, and menace, and scorn."

There is a fine image in one of Sheridan's speeches, which was stated in the *London Magazine*, Jan. 1826, never to have been in print. Describing the effect produced by one of Hasting's marches, he said: "Terror in his front, rebellion in his rear; for wherever the head of oppression was raised, trodden misery sprung up and looked about for vengeance."

Sheridan one day said to Rogers, "When posterity read the speeches of Burke, they will hardly be able to believe that, during his lifetime, he was not considered as a first-rate speaker, not even as a second-rate one."

* It had the singularity of *never winking*.

LITERARY ATTAINMENTS.

These are rated lowly by Lord Brougham, who remarks: —"Though Sheridan's education had not been neglected, for he was bred at Harrow, and with Dr. Parr, yet he was an idle and a listless boy, learning as little as possible, and suffering as much wretchedness; an avowal which to the end of his life he never ceased to make, and to make in a very affecting manner. Accordingly, he brought away from school a very slender provision of classical learning; and his taste, never correct or chaste, was wholly formed by acquaintance with the English poets and dramatists, and perhaps a few of our more ordinary prose-writers; for in no other language could he read with anything approaching to ease. Of those poets, he most *professed* to admire and to have studied Dryden; he plainly *had* most studied Pope; whom he always vilified and always imitated. But of dramatists, his passion evidently was Congreve, and after him Vanbrugh, Farquhar, and even Wycherley; all of whom served for the model, partly even for the magazine of his own dramatic writings, as Pope did of his verses. The *Duenna*, however, is formed after the fashion of Gay; of whom it falls farther short than the *School for Scandal* does of Congreve. That his plays were great productions for any age, astonishing for a youth of twenty-three or twenty-five, was unquestionable.

"He required great preparation for the display of his talents: hence he was not a debater—one who attacks and defends upon every occasion that calls him forth. It is observable that of this kind of oratory, antiquity has left us no specimen; and that in modern Europe it has not existed out of England. Lord North, Mr. Pitt, and Mr. Fox, excelled in it: the first, perhaps, surpassed the two others in this useful, it may, perhaps, be called *most* useful, species of oratory. But though Mr. Sheridan was no debater, he was sometimes most felicitous in an epigrammatic reply."

To show to what an extent this *preparation* was carried, his biographer mentions having found among Sheridan's papers, a memorandum made of the precise place in which the words "Good God, Mr. Speaker," were to be introduced into one of the orator's speeches. These preparatory notes are continued down to his latest displays; and it is observable that when, from the increased derangement of his affairs, he had no longer leisure or collectedness enough to prepare, he ceased

to speak. It is concluded that the only time he could have found for this pre-arrangement of his thoughts must have been during the many hours of the day that he remained in bed—a habit, by the way, of which we have similar instances in the lives of men of talent.

Sheridan did this not for the purpose of indulging in indolence, (as he wished it to be supposed, and as it was supposed,) but for study and preparation. Tierney said that he, S., worked hard when he had to prepare himself for any great occasion. His habit was, on these emergencies, to rise at four in the morning, to light up a prodigious quantity of candles around him, and eat toasted muffins while he worked.

Wine was one of Sheridan's favourite helps to inspiration: —"If the thought (he would say,) is slow to come, a glass of good wine encourages it, and when it *does* come, a glass of good wine rewards it." He usually wrote at night.

The story of his preparation for the debate on the Naval Inquiry, in 1805, being half-a-pint of brandy, which he is described as having been seen to take at a single draught, in a coffee-house near the House of Commons, is scarcely so well authenticated as the score at "the Adam and Eve."

SHERIDAN IMITATING SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

Moore, in his *Life of Sheridan*, states there to have been found among his papers three acts of a drama without a name, written evidently in haste, and with scarcely any correction. The following verses are a specimen:

Oh yield, fair lids, the treasures of my heart,
Release those beams that make this mansion bright;
From her sweet sense, slumber! tho' sweet thou art,
Begone, and give the air she breathes in light.
Or while, oh Sleep, thou dost those glories hide,
Let rosy slumber still around her play,
Sweet as the cherub Innocence enjoy'd,
When in thy lap, new-born, in smiles he lay.
And thou, oh dream, that com'st her sleep to cheer,
Oh take my shape, and play a lover's part;
Kiss her from me, and whisper in her ear,
Till her eyes shine, 'tis night within my heart.

The biographer tells us that he has supplied a few rhymes and words that are wanting in the original copy of the song. The last line runs thus in the manuscript:

Till her eye shines, I live in darkest night—

which not rhyming as it ought, Mr. Moore has ventured to alter as above.

Now, a Correspondent of *Notes and Queries*, No. 103, observes: "The following sonnet, which occurs in the third book of Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*, is evidently the source whence Sheridan drew his inspiration, *the concluding line in both poems being the same.* Had Moore given Sheridan's without alteration, the resemblance would, in all probability, be found much closer:—

Lock up, faire liddes, the treasure of my heart,
Preserve those beames, this age's only light:
To her sweet sence, sweet sleepe some ease impart,
Her sence too weake to beare her spirits might.
And while, O Sleepe, thou closest up her sight,
(Her sight, where Love did forge this fairest dart)
O harbour all her parts in easefull plight: *
Let no strange dreame make her faire body start.
But yet, O dreame, if thou wilt not depart,
In this rare subject *from thy common right;*
But while *thyself in such a seate delight,*
Then take my shape, and *play a lover's part:*
Kiss her from me, and say *unto her sprite,*
Till her eyes shine, I live in darkest night.

BALLAD AND RHYMES.

One day, when Michael Kelly was waiting at Sheridan's house, he saw under the table half a sheet of apparently waste paper: he found it to be a ballad in Sheridan's handwriting. Kelly took it home, and set it to music; and so pleased was the poet with the composition, that he often made Kelly sing it to him:

No more shall the spring my lost treasure restore,
Uncheer'd, I still wander alone;
And, sunk in dejection, for ever deplore
The sweets of the days that are gone.
While the sun, as it rises, to others shines bright,
I think how it formerly shone;
While others cull blossoms, I find but a blight,
And sigh for the days that are gone.

I stray where the dew falls, through moon-lighted groves,
And list to the nightingale's song,
Her plaints still remind me of long-banish'd joys,
And the sweets of the days that are gone.
Each dewdrop that steals from the dark eye of night,
Is a tear for the bliss that is flown;
While others cull blossoms, I find but a blight,
And sigh for the days that are gone.

Sheridan excelled in rhyming to the same word through a long string of couplets, till every rhyme that the language supplies for it is exhausted. Mr. Moore gives, as specimens, these trifles:

Muse, assist me to complain,
While I grieve for Lady *Jane*,
I ne'er was in so sad a vein,
Deserted now by Lady *Jane*.

* * * * *

Lord Petre's house was built by Payne:
No mortal architect made *Jane*.
If hearts had windows, through the pane
Of mind you'd see sweet Lady *Jane*.

* * * * *

At breakfast I could scarce refrain
From tears at missing Lady *Jane;*
Nine rolls I eat, in hopes to gain
The roll that might have fall'n to *Jane*,—&c.

Another, written on a Mr. Bigg, contains some ludicrous couplets:

I own he's not fam'd for a reel or a jig,
Tom Sheridan there surpasses Tom *Bigg*—
For, lam'd in one thigh, he's obliged to go zig-
Zag, like a crab—so no dancer is *Bigg*.
Those who think him a coxcomb, or call him a prig,
How little they know of the mind of my *Bigg!*
Tho' he ne'er can be mine, hope will catch at a twig—
Two deaths—and I yet may become Mrs. *Bigg*.
Oh give me, with him, but a cottage and pig,
And content I would live on beans, bacon, and *Bigg*.

THEATRICAL CONCERNS.

When Coleridge, the poet, submitted one of his plays to Sheridan's managerial decision, it did not receive from him the attention which the subsequent success of the piece decided it to be entitled to. In a cavern scene, where the silence of the place is presumed to be only broken by the slow dropping of the water from its vault, Sheridan, in reading it to his friends, repeated the words of one of the characters in a solemn tone—"Drip! drip! drip!"—adding, "Why, here's nothing but *dripping*." The story is told by Coleridge himself, in the preface to his tragedy, with good-humour and frankness becoming one sensible of his power, and conscious that the witty use of an unfortunate expression could but little affect the real merit of the production.

An unfortunate dramatist, whose comedies, when returned upon his hands, were generally reduced by the managers from five acts to two, or even one, complained in wrath and bitterness to Sheridan, who attempted to console him by saying, "Why, my good fellow, what I would advise you is, to present a comedy of a *score* of acts, and the devil will be in it if *five* be not saved."

The Hon. Mr. S—— having finished a tragedy, sent it to Sheridan for performance at Drury-lane. The proprietor looked at it, and laid it on the table. In a few days the author called. "Well, now my dear Sheridan, pray what do you think of it? My friend, Cumberland, has promised me a prologue; and I dare say, for the interest of the theatre, you will have no objection to supply me with an epilogue?" "Trust me, my dear sir," replied Sheridan, drily, "it will never come to that, depend on't."

The proprietor one day fell into high words with Delpini relative to an arrear of salary due to him as Man Friday in *Robinson Crusoe*. Sheridan, provoked at what he deemed the insolence of the pantomimist, told him that he had forgotten his station. "No, indeed, Monsieur Sheridan, I have not," retorted Delpini; "I know the difference between us perfectly well. In birth, parentage, and education, you are superior to me; but in life, character, and behaviour, I am superior to you."

One evening, when Kemble and Sheridan had drunk very deep together, and the latter was in high spirits, Kemble was complaining of want of novelty at Drury-lane Theatre, and that, as manager, he felt uneasy at the lack of it. "My dear Kemble," said Sheridan, "don't talk of grievances now." But Kemble still kept on saying, "Indeed we must seek for novelty, or the theatre must sink—novelty, novelty alone can prop it." "Then," replied Sheridan, with a smile, "if you want novelty, act *Hamlet*, and have music played between your pauses." Kemble, however he might have felt the sarcasm, did not appear to take it in bad part.

During Kemble's management, Sheridan had occasion to make some complaint; this produced a "nervous" letter from Kemble, to which Sheridan's reply is amusing enough. Thus he writes:—

That the management of the theatre is a situation capable of becoming *troublesome* is information which I do not want, and a discovery which I thought you had made long ago.

Sheridan then treats Kemble's letter as a *nervous flight*, not to be noticed seriously, adding his anxiety for the interests of the theatre, and alluding to Kemble's touchiness and reserve; and then :—

If there is anything amiss in your mind not arising from the *troublesomeness* of your situation, it is childish and unmanly not to disclose it. The frankness with which I have dealt towards you entitles me to expect that you should have done so.

But I have no reason to believe this to be the case; and, attributing your letter to a disorder which I know ought not to be indulged, I prescribe that thou shalt keep thine appointment at the Piazza Coffee-house, to-morrow at five, and, taking four bottles of claret instead of three, to which in sound health you might stint yourself, forget that you ever wrote the letter, as I shall that I ever received it.

R. B. SHERIDAN.

Byron tells a droll story of a farce-writer worrying the ruined proprietor at a most critical moment. Byron, before he quitted England, had promised to write a prologue (?) for a farce by D——s, which the author sent to the Theatre; but his Lordship sailed in such a hurry that he did not write the prologue. "I remember this farce," he adds, "from a curious circumstance. When Drury-lane Theatre was burnt to the ground, by which accident Sheridan and his son lost the few remaining shillings they were worth, what doth my friend do? Why, before the fire was out, he writes a note to Tom Sheridan, the manager of this combustible concern, to inquire whether this farce was not converted into fuel, with about two thousand other unactable manuscripts, which, of course, were in great peril, if not wholly consumed. Now, was not this characteristic?—the ruling passions of Pope are nothing to it. Whilst the poor distracted manager was bewailing the loss of a building only worth 300,000*l.*, together with some twenty thousand pounds' worth of rags and tinsel in the tiring-rooms, Bluebeard's elephants, and all that—in comes a note from a scorching author, requiring at his hands two acts and odd scenes of a farce!"

A playwright had sent a comedy to Mr. Sheridan for perusal, and, of course, approval, and of course heard nothing more of his work. He waited six months patiently; the season was then over, and he therefore resolved to wait on till the next season began: he did so; he then called at Mr. Sheridan's, who at that time lived in George-street, Hanover-square—not at home, of course; he then despatched a note

—no answer; another—ditto; another call—still the same result. At last, however, the author hit upon the expedient of posting himself in the hall on a day in the evening of which there was to be an important debate in the House of Commons. This was a blockade which even the ingenuity of the wit could not evade; and, at length, the manuscript was returned.

He usually carried a bag of papers with him when he went to a coffee-house, to look over them there: he took one day a bag of love-letters by mistake, and getting drunk, left them there. The sum asked by the person who got possession of them was one hundred guineas; this was refused, and they were not recovered without some violence.

Campbell told Moore that after Sheridan's death there was found an immense heap of letters, which he had taken charge of to frank, from poor husbands to wives, fathers to children, &c.

Sheridan's carelessness in such matters is told by his first wife in one of her letters: "You must pay for this letter, for Dick has got your last with the direction: and anything in his hands is *irrecoverable!*"

Mr. Ironmonger lived in a handsome house at Effingham, near Letherhead; and Sheridan artfully advised him to go to France, and he would take house, furniture, &c. off his hands for five years. But Ironmonger was obliged to come home on account of Bonaparte's *sortie* from Elba in 1814, when he had great difficulty in getting possession of his house again.

PRACTICAL JOKES.

Rogers relates that Sheridan, Tickell, and the rest of their set delighted in all sorts of practical jokes. For instance while they were staying with Mr. and Mrs. Crewe, at Crewe Hall, Mrs. Sheridan and Mrs. Crewe would be driving out in the carriage, Sheridan and Tickell riding on before them: suddenly the ladies would see Sheridan stretched upon the ground, apparently in the agonies of death, and Tickell standing over him in a theatrical attitude of despair.

Again, Crewe expressed a great desire to meet Richardson, who wrote the play of *The Fugitive*, and of whom he had heard Sheridan and Tickell talk with much admiration. "I

have invited him here," said Sheridan, "and he will positively be with you to-morrow." Next day, accordingly, Richardson made his appearance, and horrified the Crewes by the vulgarity and oddity of his manners and language. The fact was, Sheridan had got one of Mr. Crewe's tenants to personate Richardson for the occasion.

One night, as Sheridan, Fitzpatrick, and Lord John Townshend came out of Drury-lane Theatre, they observed among the carriages in waiting, a very handsome phaeton with a groom in it. Sheridan asked the groom to let him get into the phaeton for five minutes, just to try it. The man consented, and stepped down. Sheridan got in, made Fitzpatrick and Townshend get in also, and then drove off at full speed for Vauxhall, whither they were pursued by the groom and a great crowd shouting and hallooing after them. At Vauxhall the groom recovered the phaeton, and was pacified by the present of a few shillings. But it would seem that this exploit had been attended with some unpleasant consequences, for he could not bear any allusion to it: he would say, "Pray do not mention such an absurd frolic."

Sheridan, with his son Tom, was dining one day at Mr. Peter Moore's, Tom being then in a nervous, debilitated state. The servant, in passing quickly between the guests and the fire-place, struck down the plate-warmer. This made a strange rattle, and caused Tom Sheridan to start and tremble. Peter Moore, provoked at this, rebuked the servant, and said, "I suppose you have broken all the plates?" "No, sir," said the servant, "not one." "No?" exclaimed Sheridan, "then, damn it, you have made all that noise for nothing."

Sheridan was one evening seen by Mr. Rogers in company with the famous Pamela, Madame de Genlis' adopted daughter. She was lovely—quite radiant with beauty; and Sheridan either was, or pretended to be, violently in love with her. On one occasion he kept labouring the whole evening at a copy of verses in French, which he intended to present to her, every now and then writing down a word or two on a slip of paper with a pencil. The best of it was that he understood French very imperfectly.

Sheridan was a glorious hoaxer. Tom Stepney supposed algebra to be a learned language, and referred to his father to know whether it was not so, who said, "Certainly: Latin,

Greek, and Algebra." "By what people was it spoken?" "By the Algebrians, to be sure," said Sheridan.*

Sometimes this hoaxing had a purpose:—as when Sheridan took Dowton's gig to come to town, while Dowton, with all the patience and sturdiness of a dun, was waiting in the parlour to see him.

Akin to hoaxing is the following. Sheridan once told Rogers of a scene that occurred in a French theatre in 1772, where two French officers stared a good deal at his wife: and Sheridan not knowing a word of French, could do nothing but put his arms a-kimbo and look bluff and defying at them; which they, not knowing a word of English, could only reply to by the very same attitude and look.

HOW SHERIDAN GOT A WATCH.

Mr. Harris, one of the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre, had made several appointments to see Mr. Sheridan, not one of which the latter ever kept. At length, Mr. Harris communicated to him that unless he kept the next appointment made, their acquaintance must cease. Sheridan expressed great sorrow, and positively fixed next day to call upon Mr. Harris at the theatre, at one o'clock. At about three, he made his appearance in Hart-street, where he met Mr. Tregent, the celebrated French watchmaker, who was a man of theatrical taste, and had been intimate with Garrick.

Sheridan told Tregent that he was on his way to call upon Harris. "I have just left him," said Tregent, "in a violent passion, having waited for you ever since one o'clock." "What have you been doing at the theatre?" said Sheridan. "Why," replied Tregent, "Harris is about to present Bate Dudley with a gold watch, and I have taken him half a dozen that he may choose one." "Indeed," said Sheridan, and they parted.

Mr. Sheridan proceeded to Mr. Harris's room. "Well," said the latter, "I have waited nearly two hours for you again; I had almost given you up, and if—" "Stop, my dear Harris," said Sheridan, interrupting him; "I assure you these things occur more from my misfortunes than any fault; I declare I thought it was but one o'clock, for it so happens

* Lord Holland used to tell a story of a man who professed to have studied Euclid all through; and upon some one saying to him, "Well, solve me that problem," answered, "Oh, I never looked at the cuts."

that I have no watch, and to tell you the truth, am too poor to buy one; but when the day comes that I can, you will see I shall be as punctual as any other man." "Well, then," said the unsuspecting Harris, "if that be all, you shall not long want a watch, for here (opening his drawer) are half a dozen of Tregent's best—choose any one you like, and do me the favour of accepting it." Sheridan affected the greatest surprise at the appearance of the watches; but did as he was bid, and selected, certainly not the worst, for the *cadeau*.—*Michael Kelly.*

RICHARDSON'S DISPUTATIONS.

Richardson was remarkable for his love of disputation; and Tickell, when hard pressed by him in argument, used often, as a last resource, to assume the voice and manner of Mr. Fox, which he had the power of mimicking so exactly, that Richardson confessed he sometimes stood awed and silenced by the resemblance.

This disputatious humour of Richardson was once turned to account by Sheridan in a very characteristic manner. Having had a hackney-coach in employ for five or six hours, and not being provided with the means of paying for it, he happened to espy Richardson in the street, and proposed to take him in the coach some part of his way. The offer being accepted, Sheridan lost no time in starting a subject for conversation, on which he knew his companion, was sure to become argumentative and animated. Having, by well-managed contradiction, brought him to the proper pitch of excitement, he affected to grow impatient and angry himself, and saying that "he could not think of staying in the same coach with a person that would use such language," pulled the check-string, and desired the coachman to let him out. Richardson, wholly occupied with the argument, and regarding the retreat of his opponent as an acknowledgment of defeat, still pressed his point, and even holloaed "more last words" through the coach-window after Sheridan, who walking quietly home, left the poor disputant responsible for the heavy fare of the coach.

SHERIDAN'S SENSIBILITY.

Mr. Moore relates the following circumstance connected with Sheridan's difference with his father—as a proof of the

natural tendency of Sheridan's heart to let all its sensibilities flow in the right channel.

During the run of one of his pieces, having received information from an old family servant that his father (who still refused to have any intercourse with him,) meant to attend, with his daughters, at the representation of the piece, Sheridan took up his station by one of the side-scenes, opposite the box where they sat, and there continued, unobserved, to look at them during the greater part of the night. On his return home, he was so affected by the various recollections that came upon him, that he burst into tears, and being questioned as to the cause of his agitation by Mrs. Sheridan, to whom it was new to see him returning thus saddened from the scene of his triumph, he owned how deeply it had gone to his heart, "to think that *there* sat his father and his sisters before him, and yet that he alone was not permitted to go near them or to speak to them."

SHERIDAN'S MONEY-MATTERS.

Linley told Moore that "Sheridan persuaded the Linleys to part with their shares in Drury-lane for annuities which were never paid: he thus got the disposal of everything, the sale of private boxes, &c., all into his own hands. Told some other stories of S.'s trickery in money-matters, but seemed willing to acquit him of any low, premeditated design in these various shifts and contrivances. Told a story of a picture of his sister by Gainsborough, which he (Linley) sent to the exhibition of that artist's pictures, at the request of the directors; but which was seized, with a great many pictures of Sheridan's, that were also there, by Burgess, S.'s attorney, under pretence of a *lien* upon his property; but S. afterwards, in consideration of a loan of 100*l.* from Linley, had the picture restored to him. Another story about his trying to get 400*l.* out of old Mrs. Linley, to pay the deposit required by the proprietor of the Lyceum, when the company removed to that house after the burning of Drury-lane. Some years before S.'s death, he requested Peter Moore to appropriate as much of his Cornwall income as could be spared above a bare subsistence for him, to the liquidation of his debts; and he allowed it to go on for some time, till at last his necessities forced him to violate his intentions."

Sheridan, the first time he met his son Tom, after his mar-

riage, was seriously angry with him; told him he had made his will, and cut him off with a shilling. Tom said he was, indeed, very sorry, and immediately added, "You don't happen to have the shilling about you now, sir, do you?" Old S. burst out laughing, and they became friends again. S. was one day extremely angry with his servant for lighting a fire in a little room off his hall, because it tempted the duns to stay, by making them so comfortable.

Sheridan's friend, Richardson, who thoroughly knew him, considered his whole character to have been influenced by the straitened circumstances in which he was placed; and he (Richardson) often used to say that "if an enchanter could, by the touch of his wand, endow Sheridan suddenly with fortune, he would instantly transform him into a most honourable and moral man." In corroboration of this opinion, Mr. Moore states that in the course of his enquiries, (as the biographer of Sheridan,) he found all who were engaged in pecuniary dealings with him, unanimous in expressing their conviction that he always *meant* fairly and honourably; and that to the inevitable pressure of circumstances alone, any failure that occurred in his engagements was to be imputed.

The want of regularity led to innumerable sufferings in his pecuniary transactions. So far from *never paying his debts*, he was always paying them; for want of proper care, in examining accounts and keeping receipts, the fraudulent dun was paid two or three times over, whilst the just creditor was left unpaid.

His *bonâ fide* debts, as proved by his friends in 1808, were about 10,000*l.*, but he appeared to owe five or six times as much. Moreover, he would never suffer any claim to be contested. Two years after his death, the claims sent in upon his estate amounted to but 5,500*l.*—a small sum for a man to owe, who has been made the butt of scores of stories of cheating creditors and never paying debts—which had no foundation upon truth.

As an instance of the mismanagement in Sheridan's house, it is told that his butler, when Dr. Bain was called in, and found him in a high fever, said that he had drunk nothing extraordinary the day before,—"only two bottles of port."

Haydon, in his *Autobiography*, complains of Moore omitting the following story, which was told to him (Haydon) by one of Stephen Storace's intimate friends. Storace died in his

thirty-first year, through over-exertion as composer, at Drury-lane, during Sheridan's proprietorship. He left his widow ill-provided for. "Sheridan gave the theatre for a benefit. The house was crowded of course. Sheridan went to the door-keeper and manager, and friend, and swept off all the receipts, and the widow never got a shilling. This was told Haydon by Prince Hoare." Nevertheless, we can scarcely credit the story.

Haydon also relates that "when Sheridan was Paymaster of the Navy at Somerset House, the butcher brought a leg of mutton to the kitchen. The cook took it, and putting it into the kettle to boil, went upstairs for the money, as the butcher was not to leave the joint without it. As she stayed rather long, the butcher very coolly went over, took off the cover, took out the mutton, and walked away. This is a fact. The cook told it to the porter of the Royal Academy, who, being my model, told it to me as he was sitting." (A precisely similar story was common in Letherhead, at the time Sheridan lived at Polesden, where the affair happened.)

A creditor whom Sheridan had repeatedly avoided, met him at last plump in Pall Mall. There was no possibility of avoiding him, but S. never lost his presence of mind. "Oh," said Sheridan, "that's a beautiful mare you are on." "D'ye think so?" "Yes, indeed, how does she trot?" The creditor, flattered, told him he should see, and immediately put her into full trotting pace. The instant he trotted off, Sheridan turned a corner, and was out of sight.

Kenny, the dramatist, told Moore that Shaw having lent Sheridan nearly 500*l.*, used to dun him very considerably for it; and one day, when he had been rating S. about the debt, and insisting that he must be paid, the latter, having played off some of his plausible wheedling upon him, ended by saying that he was very much in want of 25*l.* to pay the expenses of a journey he was about to take, and he knew Shaw would be good-natured enough to lend it to him. "'Pon my word," said Shaw, "this is too bad: after keeping me out of my money in so shameful a manner, you have now the face to ask me for more; but it won't do; I must be paid my money, and it is most disgraceful," &c. "My dear fellow," said Sheridan, "hear reason: the sum you ask me for is a very considerable one; whereas I only ask you for five-and-twenty pounds."

We have the authority of Mr. Moore that the stories of

Sheridan borrowing money from friends are not to be trusted. This was not his habit: Mr. Peter Moore, Mr. Richard Ironmonger, and one or two others did more for the comfort of his decline than any of his high and noble associates. One instance, however, should be mentioned: one night, when Mr. Canning was in the House of Commons, a letter was put into his hands from his old friend, Sheridan, then lying ill in bed, requesting the loan of a hundred pounds—which was promptly complied with.

One of the jests of Scogan, by that old fellow, Andrew Borde, showing how he defrauded two shoemakers—one out of a right-foot boot, and the other out of a left-foot one—has been converted into a story of Sheridan getting a pair of boots by similar means, when he had neither money nor credit! He hated these fabrications, and once complained to a friend of ours of the nuisance of being made the principal in any fool's jest to win the laugh of still greater fools.

"In all his dealings with the world, (says Rogers,) Sheridan certainly carried the *privileges of genius* as far as they were ever carried by man."

Porson said of Sheridan—"He is a *promising fellow.*"

Bob Mitchell, who was once in great prosperity, became—like a great many other people—one of Sheridan's creditors: in fact, Sheridan owed Bob nearly three thousand pounds. This drove him to great straits, and one day, in his uncomfortable wanderings, he called upon Sheridan. The conversation turned upon his financial difficulties, but not upon the principal cause of them, which was Sheridan's debt; but which he contrived to keep out of the talk. At last, Bob, in a sort of agony, exclaimed—"I have not a guinea left, and by heaven, I don't know where to get one." Sheridan jumped up, and thrusting a piece of gold into his hand, exclaimed, with tears in his eyes,—"It never shall be said that Bob Mitchell wanted a guinea while his friend Sheridan had one to *give him.*"

SHERIDAN AS A SPORTSMAN.

Although Sheridan usually had his country-house, he had no feeling for natural scenery, and cared nothing for its beauties. Mr. Moore quotes the following passage corroborative of the above, from a letter "written by a very eminent person, whose name all lovers of the picturesque associate with their best enjoyment of its beauties:"—

"At one time I saw a good deal of Sheridan—he and his wife passed some time here, and he is an instance that a taste for poetry and for scenery are not always united. Had his house been in the midst of Hounslow Heath, he could not have taken less interest in all around it: his delight was in shooting, all and every day, and my gamekeeper said, that of all the gentlemen he had ever been out with, he never knew so bad a shot."

THE TWO SHERIDANS.

Tom Sheridan and his father had many a pass of wit. One night, as they were supping together, just when Tom expected to get into Parliament, "I think, father," he said, "that many men who are thought to be great patriots in the House of Commons, are great humbugs. For my own part, if I get into Parliament, I will pledge myself to no party, but write upon my forehead, in legible characters, 'To be let.'" "And under that, Tom," said his father, "write 'Unfurnished.'" Tom took the joke but soon repaid it.

Mr. Sheridan had a cottage bordering on Hounslow Heath. Tom asked his father for a supply of cash. "Money I have none," was the reply. "But money I must have," said Tom. "If that be the case," said the affectionate parent, "you will find a case of loaded pistols upstairs, and a horse ready-saddled in the stable—the night is dark, and you are within half a mile of Hounslow Heath." "I understand what you mean," said Tom, "but I tried that last night. I unluckily stopped Peake, your treasurer, who told me that you had been beforehand with him, and had robbed him of every sixpence in the world."

SHERIDAN'S WIT.

His wit, derived from a warm imagination, or sharpened by a facility of epigram and point, was eminently brilliant, and almost always successful: it was, like all his speaking, exceedingly prepared, but it was skilfully introduced and happily applied; and it was well mingled also with humour, occasionally descending to farce. How little it was the inspiration of the moment all men were aware who knew his habits; but a singular proof of this was presented by Mr. Moore, when he came to write his *Life;* for we there find given to the world with a frankness which must almost have

made their author shake in his grave, the secret note-books of this famous wit; and are thus enabled to trace the jokes in embryo, with which he had so often made the walls of St. Stephen's shake, in a merriment excited by the happy appearance of sudden unpremeditated effusion.

Take an instance from Moore, giving extracts from Sheridan's common-place book:—"He employs his fancy in his narrative, and keeps his recollections for his wit." Again, the same idea is expanded into: "When he makes his jokes, you applaud the accuracy of his memory, and 'tis only when he states his facts that you admire the flights of his imagination." But the thought was too good to be wasted on the desert air of a common-place book. So forth it came at the expense of Michael Kelly, who, having been a composer of music, became a wine-merchant. "You will," said the *ready* wit, "import your music and compose your wine." Nor was this service exacted from the old idea thought sufficient—so in the House of Commons an easy and apparently off-hand parenthesis was thus filled with it at Mr. Dundas's cost and charge, ("who generally resorts to his memory for his jokes, and to his imagination for his facts.").

One day, meeting two royal dukes walking up St. James's-street, the youngest thus flippantly addressed him: "I say, Sherry, we have just been discussing whether you are a greater fool or rogue: what is your own opinion, my boy?" Mr. Sheridan, having bowed and smiled at the compliment, took each of them by the arm, and instantly replied, "Why, faith, I believe I am between *both*."

Being on a parliamentary committee, he one day entered the room when all the members were seated, and ready to commence business. Perceiving no vacant seat, he bowed; and looking round the table with a droll expression of countenance said, "Will any gentleman *move*, that I may 'take the chair'?"

Looking over a number of the *Quarterly Review*, one day, at Brookes's, he said, in reply to a gentleman who observed that the editor, Mr. Gifford, had boasted of his power of conferring and *distributing literary reputation*, "Very likely; and in the present instance I think he has done it so profusely as to have left none for himself."

Sheridan once handled with considerable irony, Clifford, a lawyer, who had made some strong comments upon his (Sheridan's) political conduct, to which he replied: "As to

the lawyer, who has honoured me with so much abuse, I do not know how to answer him, as I am no great proficient in the language or manners of St. Giles's. But one thing I can say of him, and it is in his favour:—I hardly expect you will believe me—the thing is incredible—but I pledge my word to the fact—that once, if not twice, but once, most assuredly, I did meet him in the company of gentlemen."

When there was some proposal to lay a tax upon milestones, Sheridan said that it was unconstitutional, as they were a race that could not meet to remonstrate.

Sharpe was complaining of an ugly house built by Gen. D'Arblay just near them at Letherhead,* when Sheridan said, "Oh, you know we can easily get rid of that, we can pack it off out of the country under the Alien Act."

Sir James Mackintosh seems to have chosen an odd time to make up his mind. Moore notes, May 31, 1819, "Mackintosh, who seemed yesterday to think that I must hold a veil up before Sheridan's criminalities, told me this morning he had been thinking of the subject the greater part of the night, and had come to the decision, that I ought to do no such thing; and that I ought (as he owned, I seemed well inclined to do) to tell the truth, and nothing but the truth."

A story is told that, during the season when the *Castle Spectre* filled the exhausted treasury of Drury-lane, the authors, Monk Lewis and Sheridan, had some dispute in the green-room, when the former offered, in confirmation of his arguments, to bet Mr. Sheridan all the money which the *Castle Spectre* had brought, that he was right. "No," replied the manager, "I cannot afford to bet so much as that; but I will tell you what I will do, I'll bet you *all it is worth.*"

Sheridan's answer to Lord Lauderdale is excellent: on the latter saying he would repeat some good thing Sheridan had mentioned to him, "Pray don't, my dear Lauderdale; *a joke in your mouth is no laughing matter.*"

Mr. Moore remarks that Sheridan's witticisms (those which were his own) were all made *à loisir*, and kept by him with a patience quite miraculous till the exact moment when they might be brought forward with the best effect. This accounts for his general silence in company, and the admirable things that came when he *did* speak.

A miserly old person, remarkable for his reluctance to con-

* This must have been the house D'Arblay built at Westhumble, near the foot of Box Hill; it was named Camilla Lacy.

tribute to public institutions, was, at length, prevailed upon to attend a charity sermon in Westminster. After the sermon, the plate was handed round the vestry: Fox and Sheridan were present. "The Doctor has absolutely given his pound," said Fox. "Then," said Sheridan, "he must absolutely think he is going to die." "Poh," replied Fox, "even Judas threw away twice the money." "Yes," said Sheridan, "but how long was it before he was hanged?"

An elderly maiden lady, an inmate of a country-house at which Sheridan was passing a few days, expressed an inclination to take a stroll with him, but he excused himself on account of the badness of the weather. Shortly afterwards, she met him sneaking out alone. "So, Mr. Sheridan," said she, "it has cleared up." "Yes, madam," was the reply; "it certainly has cleared up enough for one, but not enough for two;" and off he went.

He preserved his pleasantry and keen perception of the ridiculous almost as long as life lasted. A solicitor, Mr. R. W., who had been much favoured in wills, waited on Sheridan: after he had left the room, another friend came in, to whom Sheridan said, "My friends have been very kind in calling upon me, and offering their services in their respective ways: Dick W. has just been here with his *will-making face.*"

During his last illness, the medical attendants apprehending that they would be obliged to perform an operation on him, asked him "if he had ever undergone one?"—"Never," replied Sheridan, "except when sitting for my picture, or having my hair cut."

THE MALT-TAX.

Mr. Whitbread was one evening at Brookes's talking loudly and largely against the ministry for laying what he called the *war-tax* upon malt; every one present concurred in this opinion; but Sheridan could not resist the gratification of a hit at the *brewer* himself. He took out his pencil, and wrote upon the back of a letter the following lines, which he handed across the table to Mr. Whitbread:—

They've rais'd the price of table-drink,
What is the reason, do you think?
The tax on *malt's* the cause, I hear,
But what has *malt* to do with *beer?*

THE DOG-TAX.

The day that Dog Dent was to bring forward the motion (that gave him that name,) about a tax upon dogs, Sheridan came early to the House, and saw no one but Dent, sitting in a contemplative posture in one corner. Sheridan stole round to him unobserved, and putting his hand under the seat to Dent's legs, mimicked the barking of a dog, at which Dent started up alarmed, as if his conscience really dreaded some attack from the race he was plotting against.

DEGREES OF OBSTINACY.

Sheridan always maintained that the Duke of Wellington would succeed in Portugal; General Tarleton the reverse. It was a matter of constant dispute between them. Tarleton, who had been wrong, grew obstinate; so, on the news of the retreat of the French at Torres Vedras, Sheridan, by way of taunt, said, "Well, Tarleton, are you on your high horse still?" "Oh! higher than ever: if I was on a horse before, I am on an elephant now." "No, no, my dear fellow, you were on an ass before, and you are on a mule now." Moore tells the story, which Lord John Russell has explained in a note.

"THE AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY."

After dining at Mr. Rogers's Sir Walter (then Mr.) Scott accompanied him to a party given by Lady Jersey. They met there Sheridan, who put the question to Scott in express terms, "Pray, Mr. Scott, did you, or did you not, write *Waverley?*" Scott replied, "*On my honour*, I did not." "Now," remarks Mr. Rogers, "though Scott may, perhaps, be justified for returning an answer in the negative, I cannot think that he is to be excused for strengthening it with 'on my honour.'"

WIFE EPIGRAM.

Lord Erskine declared in a large party, in which Lady Erskine and Mr. Sheridan were present, that a "wife was only a *tin canister* tied to one's tail;" upon which Sheridan presented Lady Erskine with these lines:—

> "Lord Erskine, at woman presuming to rail,
> Calls a wife a 'tin canister tied to one's tail.'
> And fair Lady Anne, while the subject he carries on,
> Seems hurt at his lordship's degrading comparison.

But wherefore degrading? considered aright,
A canister's POLISH'D and USEFUL and BRIGHT,
And should dirt its original purity hide,
That's the fault of the PUPPY to whom it is TIED!"

SHERIDAN AND MRS. SIDDONS.

Mrs. Siddons told Rogers, that one night as she stepped into her carriage to return home from the theatre, Sheridan suddenly jumped in after her. "Mr. Sheridan," she said, "I trust that you will behave with all propriety: if you do not, I shall immediately let down the glass, and desire the servant to show you out." Sheridan *did* behave with all propriety; "but," continued Mrs. Siddons, "as soon as we had reached my house in Marlborough-street, and the footman had opened the carriage-door, only think! the provoking wretch bolted out in the greatest haste, and slunk away, as if anxious to escape unseen." The great *tragédienne* evidently did not consider herself in Sheridan's company as would the *Quarterly* reviewer who said that he should as soon think of flirting with the Archbishop of Canterbury as with Mrs. Siddons.

SHERIDAN CONVIVIAL.

Sheridan did not display his admirable powers in company till he had been warmed by wine. During the earlier part of dinner, he was generally heavy and silent, and when invited to drink a glass of wine, would often reply, "No, thank you; I'll take a little small-beer." After dinner, when he had a tolerable quantity of wine, he was brilliant, indeed. But when he went on, swallowing too much, he became downright stupid. Rogers once, after a dinner-party at the house of Edwards, the bookseller in Pall Mall, walked with him to Brookes's, when he had absolutely lost the use of speech.

Sheridan, Sir Walter (then Mr.) Scott, and Moore, were one day dining with Mr. Rogers, and Sheridan was talking in his very best style, when Moore interrupted Sheridan by exclaiming, "Isn't it time to go to Lydia White's?" (a lady who delighted in giving parties to as many celebrated people as she could collect).

In the intervals between these flashes that were wont to set the table on a roar, it must not be imagined that Sheridan ceased altogether to be agreeable: "on the contrary," (says Moore,) "he had a grace and good-nature in his manner,

which gave a charm to even his most ordinary sayings—and there was, besides, that ever-speaking lustre in his eye, which made it impossible, even when he was silent, to forget who he was."

Mr. Poyntz, who was intimate with Sheridan, told Haydon, the painter, that once, when he was dining with S. at Somerset House, and they were all in high feather, in rushed the servant and said, "Sir, the house is on fire!" "Bring another bottle of claret," said Sheridan, "it is not my house."

When Sheridan was asked what wine he liked best, he answered, other people's. This had, however, been said before, by some Greek sage.

Sir Nathaniel Wraxall tells us that when he last dined in company with Sheridan, in 1807, he displayed his usual convivial talents, which never forsook him. But the host, the Duke of Queensbury, was above eighty, and had become deaf, and did not allow Sheridan to sit long enough, or to swallow sufficient wine for fully expanding his powers of colloquial entertainment.

The opinions of Mr. Charles Mathews, the elder, and Sir Walter Scott, are at variance with others, of Sheridan's conviviality. Mathews asserted that he (Sheridan) was generally very dull in society, and sat sullen and silent, swallowing glass after glass, rather a hindrance than a help. But there was a time when he broke out with a resumption of what had been going on, done with great force, and generally attacking some person in the company, on some opinions which he expressed. This is Mathews's account. Scott never saw Sheridan but in large parties: he describes him as having a Bardolph countenance, with heavy features, but his eye possessing the most distinguished brilliancy.*

"Sheridan's liking for me, (whether he was mystifying me, I do not know, but Lady Caroline Lamb and others told me that he said the same both before and after he knew me,) was founded upon *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. He told me that he did not care about poetry (or about mine—at least, any but *that* poem of mine), but he was sure, from *that* and other symptoms, I should make an orator, if I would but take to speaking, and grow a Parliament man. He never ceased harping upon this to me to the last."

One night, after dining with Rogers, Byron notes: "Sat

* These recollections by Lord Byron have been selected and abridged from the journals and diaries in Mr. Moore's *Life* of the poet.

down Sheridan at Brookes's, where, by the bye, he could not well have set down himself, as he and I were the only drinkers. Sherry means to stand for Westminster, as Cochrane must vacate. Brougham is a candidate. I fear for poor dear Sherry. Both have talents of the highest order, but the youngster has yet a character. We shall see, if he lives to Sherry's age, how he will pass over the red-hot ploughshares of public life. I don't know why, but I hate to see the *old ones* lose; particularly Sheridan, notwithstanding all his *méchanceté*.

"In society I have met Sheridan frequently: he was superb! He had a sort of liking for me, and never attacked me, at least to my face, and he did everybody else—high names, and wits and orators, and some of them poets also. I have seen him cut up Whitbread, quiz Madame de Staël, annihilate Colman, and do little less by some others, (whose names, as friends, I set not down,) of good fame and ability.

"The last time I met him was, I think, at Sir Gilbert Blane's, where he was as quick as ever,—no, it was not the last time; the last time was at Douglas Kinnaird's.

"I have met him in all places and parties—at Whitehall, with the Melbournes, at the Marquis of Tavistock's, at Robins's the auctioneer's, at Sir Humphry Davy's, at Sam Rogers's—in short, in most kinds of company, and always found him very convivial and delightful.

"I have more than once heard him say, that he never had a shilling of his own. To be sure, he contrived to get a good many of other people's.

"What a wreck is Sheridan! and all from bad pilotage; for no one had better gales, though now and then a little squally. Poor dear Sherry! I shall never forget the day he, and Rogers, and Moore, and I passed together, when *he* talked and we listened, without one yawn, from six to one in the morning."

One night, Sheridan was found in the street by a watchman, bereft of that "divine particle of air" called reason, and fuddled, and bewildered, and almost insensible. He, the watchman, asked, "Who are you, sir?" No answer. "What's your name?" A hiccup. "What's your name?" Answer, in a slow, deliberate, and impassive one, "Wilberforce!" Byron notes, "Is not that Sherry all over?—and to my mind excellent. Poor fellow! *his* very dregs are better than the first sprightly runnings of others."

"I have seen Sheridan weep two or three times," says Lord Byron, in his MS. Diary: "it may be that he was maudlin, but that only rendered it still more affecting; for who would see

> From Marlborough's eyes the tears of dotage flow,
> And Swift expire a driveller and a show?

Once I saw him cry at Robins's, the auctioneer's, after a splendid dinner, full of great names and high spirits. I had the honour of sitting next to Sheridan. The occasion of his tears was some observation on the staunchness of the Whigs in resigning office and keeping to their principles. Sheridan turned round and said: 'Sir, it is easy for my Lord G., or Earl G., or Marquis B., or Lord H., with thousands upon thousands a year, some of it either directly derived or inherited in sinecures or acquisitions from the public money, to boast of their patriotism, and keep aloof from temptation; but they do not know from what temptations those have kept aloof who had equal pride, at least equal talent, and not unequal passions, and, nevertheless, knew not, in the course of their lives, what it was to have a shilling of their own'—and in saying this, he wept."

CHARLES BUTLER'S REMINISCENCES OF SHERIDAN.

His public life may be divided into four stages, successively commencing with his attracting the notice of the public by *The Duenna;* his coming into Parliament; the part which he took during the King's first malady; and his conduct in the settlement of the Regency.

The natural turn of Sheridan's mind led him rather to covet eminence, as a monarch's favourite, or as preeminently shining in a brilliant court, than in fulminating a popular assembly, and wielding the democratic. But his supreme ambition was to be thought the best possible manager of a theatre. When Fortune placed Lord Erskine at the English bar, she perhaps fixed him in the only station in which he could elevate himself to fame and fortune; when she placed Mr. Sheridan in the management of a theatre, she fixed him in a situation which delighted him, but for the filling of which with honour and advantage he was totally unqualified. The Reminiscent has often seen him, in moments of bitter

recollection, when, unfortunately, the *jucundissima recordatio vitæ bene actæ* was wanting to him: his regret in those hours was not at his failure of success in his political career, but at his not having devoted himself to the Muses. He used to say that he was designed for poetry—for the *forté epos*. But never was a man less qualified for any literary exertion which required grandeur or simplicity:

> Mark how the dread Pantheon stands!
> Amid the domes of modern hands,
> Amid the idle toils of state;
> How simply, how severely great!
> *Akenside.*

No compositions are less formed than those of Mr. Sheridan to be compared with the character of the Pantheon; but "some domes of modern hands, some idle toils of state," are exquisitely pretty and brilliant. With the best of these, some compositions of Mr. Sheridan may be justly thought to bear an analogy. The Reminiscent once read to Mr. Sheridan the finest specimen of his poetry, his *Epilogue to Semiramis*. "Oh! why did I not," he exclaimed, "uniformly addict myself to poetry? for *that* I was designed." "But then," said the Reminiscent, "would you have been the admiration of the senate? Would London have emptied itself to hear your philippic on Mr. Hastings? Would you have been the intimate of Mr. Fox? Would you have been received, as doing honour to it, at Devonshire-house?" "What," he replied, "has all this done for me? What am I the better for the admiration of the senate, for Mr. Fox, for Devonshire-house? I have thrown myself away. But you shall see to-morrow." "To-morrow and to-morrow," his friend naturally replied.

Mr. Sheridan's *bon-mots* were not numerous; but when he was in good humour, the subject pleased him, and he liked his company, he sometimes displayed a kind of serious and elegant playfulness, not apparently rising to wit, but unobservedly saturated with it, which was unspeakably pleasing. Everything he then said or did, was what delights Englishmen so much, and what they understand so well—in the style and manner of a perfect gentleman.

Sheridan was very superstitious—a believer in dreams and omens. He used to say, that in all his writings, and even in his freest moments, a single irreligious opinion or word had never escaped him.

Frequently, he instantaneously disarmed those who approached him with extreme savageness, and a determined resolution to insult him. He had purchased an estate in Surrey,* of Sir William Geary, and neglected to pay for it. Sir William was very angry and abusive on the subject; he marched off in a passion, but had not walked ten paces before he met Mr. Sheridan. As furious an onset "as if two planets should rush to combat" was expected; but nothing of the kind took place. In ten minutes, Sir William returned, exclaiming, "Mr. Sheridan is the finest fellow I ever met with; I will teaze him no more for money."

Lord Derby once applied in the green-room to Mr. Sheridan, with much dignity, for the arrears of Lady Derby's salary, and vowed he would not stir from the room till it was paid. "My dear Lord," said Mr. Sheridan, "this is too bad: you have taken from us the brightest jewel in the world; and you now quarrel with us for a little of the dust she has left behind her."

In his latter years, Mr. Sheridan appeared a faded man. His pecuniary embarrassments thickened upon him; his usual expedients for removing them began to fail him. Cardinal de Retz relates, in his *Memoirs*, that during the troubles at Paris, in consequence of the war of the Fronde, Henrietta, the grand-daughter of Henry IV. of France, and the wife of our Charles I., who, with her children, had fled from England, and then resided in that city, was reduced to such a state of misery, that, in a severe January, she was without wood, or coals, or money to procure them; and that her daughter, Henrietta Maria, afterwards the wife of the Duke of Orleans, the brother of Louis XIV., was obliged to remain in bed to preserve herself from the cold. At times, Mr. Sheridan's abode was in an equal state of want.

Reflections have been cast on some of Sheridan's friends for their alleged insensibility to his distresses. But his previous usage of them should be taken into account. None, but those who witnessed it, can conceive the repeated instances of unfeeling and contumelious disregard which he showed them, by his total want of punctuality in his engagements, and his heedlessness of the inconveniences and losses which it occasioned them. One of the most remarkable of those provoking and distressing scenes was in the last elec-

* This was Polesden, described at page 65.

tion which took place in his life-time for the town of Stafford. Mr. Edward Jerningham, whose family had a strong interest with the electors, exerted himself to the utmost, as did the most illustrious person in the kingdom, to rouse Sheridan to proper activity on the occasion. All was in vain: he did not leave London till it was impossible he should reach Stafford in time to make an effective canvass. When he reached it, he loitered at the inn, while the mob clamoured for him. The consequence was, that he lost his election. But such was the fascination of his manner, and such the attraction of his name, that, before he left the town, the electors seemed to be in despair that they had not voted for him, and a large proportion of them would escort him out of the place. All that has been said of the zeal displayed by an illustrious person, for Mr. Sheridan's success, on this occasion, was confirmed by the account given of it to Mr. Butler, by Mr. E. Jerningham, an eye-witness of all that passed in it, either in London or Stafford.

Perhaps, Mr. Sheridan's most splendid exhibition was his speech in the Court of Chancery, at the hearing of the cause upon the bill filed against him by the Trustees of Drury-lane Theatre. The court was crowded: Sheridan spoke during two hours, with amazing shrewdness of observation, force of argument, and splendour of eloquence; and as he spoke from strong feeling, he introduced little of the wit and prettiness with which his oratorical displays were generally filled. While his speech lasted, a pin might be heard to drop. But it did not prevent Mr. Mansfield from making a most powerful reply. He exposed, in the strongest terms, the irregularity of Mr. Sheridan's conduct as manager of the theatre; and the injuries done by it to the proprietors, creditors, and performers. The Chancellor appeared to pity the calamities of a man so abusing his talents as Sheridan. He concluded by conjuring Mr. Sheridan to think seriously of the words with which Dr. Johnson concludes his *Life of Richard Savage*,—that "those who, in confidence of superior capacities or attainments, disregard the common maxims of life, will be reminded that nothing will supply the want of prudence; and that negligence and irregularity long continued, will make knowledge useless, wit ridiculous, and genius contemptible."

Most anxious was Mr. Sheridan to procure from Mr. Mansfield something like a retractation of the charge which he had brought against him. All he could obtain from Mr.

Mansfield was a declaration, at a consultation with Mr. Butler, at which Mr. Sheridan was present, that he spoke from the affidavits in the cause; so that his assertions and arguments depended, for their justice, on the truth of the facts mentioned in those. This was little; but it comforted Mr. Sheridan much.

We have mentioned the four divisions of Mr. Sheridan's life: the brilliant portion of it was that which intervened between his election to Parliament, and Mr. Perceval's triumph over the Fox and Grenville administration. During this period, Mr. Sheridan's irregularities and pecuniary distresses were at times very great; still, *The Duenna*, and *The School for Scandal*, and his parliamentary fame, shed a lustre round him, and buoyed him up against the waves, which threatened him, and by which he was afterwards overwhelmed. But from the time we have mentioned, his supports began to fail him, and ultimately left him to want.

The Reminiscent also relates the following:—On one occasion, Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Sheldon, of Weston, in Warwickshire, supped with Mr. Butler. Mr. Sheldon was born of Catholic parents, and brought up a Catholic; he embraced the Protestant religion, and sate in two parliaments. The Catholic question being mentioned, Mr. Sheridan, supposing Mr. Sheldon to be a Catholic, told him, he was "quite disgusted at the pitiful lowly manner in which Catholics brought forward their case; why should not you, Mr. Sheldon, walk into the house, and say, 'Here am I, Sheldon, of Weston, entitled by birth and fortune to be among you; but, because I am a Catholic, you shut your door against me'?" "I beg your pardon," said Mr. Sheldon, interrupting him, "I thought it the duty of a subject to be of the religion of his country, and therefore"—— "You quitted," said Mr. Sheridan, interrupting him, "the errors of popery, and became a member of a church which you know to be free from error? I am glad of it; you do us great honour." The subject then changed; but it was evident that Mr. Sheldon did not sit quite easy. At length, the third of the morning hours arrived; Mr. Sheldon took his watch from his pocket, and holding it forth to Mr. Sheridan, "See," he said to him, "what the hour is: you know our host is a very early riser." "Hang your *apostate watch!*" exclaimed Mr. Sheridan, "put it into your Protestant fob."

Strange as it may appear, (says Mr. Butler,) it nevertheless

is true, that common sense and dignity were possessed by Mr. Sheridan in an extraordinary degree; but they were so counteracted by habitual procrastination and irregularity, that he was scarcely known to possess them. He had very little information;—had even little classical learning;—but the powers of his mind were very great. He had a happy vein of ridicule,—he could, however, rise to the serious and the severe, and then his style of speaking was magnificent; but even in its happiest effusions he had too much prettiness.

UNFINISHED PLAYS AND POEMS.

Mr. Moore has devoted a chapter to the unfinished literary designs of Sheridan, both dramatic and poetic, from papers in his possession: some are amusing enough.

When in his seventeenth year, Sheridan produced a dramatic sketch founded on *The Vicar of Wakefield*, in which he displayed much talent for lively dialogue.

Next are three acts of a drama, of a wild and unmanageable subject, the chief personages being a band of outlaws under the disguise of *Devils*. There is a hermit, and a beautiful Reginilla in his cave, and a prince in disguise, whom the lady believes to be a phantom. A scene where the devils bring their prisoners to trial is an overcharged imitation of Fielding's satirical romance, *A Journey from this World to the Next*—the first half of which is rich in fancy and humour. In the winding up, Mr. Moore concludes the hermit would have turned out to be a banished counsellor, and the devils his followers!

Of his projected opera of *The Foresters*, Sheridan often spoke, and when regret was expressed at his having ceased to assist Old Drury with his pen, he would say, smiling, "Wait till I bring out my *Foresters*:" a few fragments remain.

He meditated a comedy on Affectation—not merely of fops and fine ladies, but affectation of Business, of Accomplishments, of Love of Letters and Wit, of Music, of Intrigue, of Sensibility, of Vivacity, of Silence and Importance, of Modesty, of Profligacy, of Moroseness. In the memorandum-book wherein this list appears, Sheridan had written, in his neatest hand, the names of three of the personages; as Sir Babble Bore, Sir Peregrine Paradox, and Feignwit, besides scattered particles of wit, some of which are very entertaining, as:

"One who changes sides in all arguments the moment any one agrees with him.

"An irresolute arguer, to whom it is a great misfortune that there are not three sides to a question—a libertine in argument, &c.

"The more he talks, the farther he is off the argument, like a bowl on a wrong bias.

"A plan of public flirtation—not to get beyond a profile.

"A pretty woman studying looks, and endeavouring to recollect an ogle—like Lady ——, who has learned to play her eyelids like Venetian blinds.

"An old woman endeavouring to put herself back to a girl.

"A true trained wit lays his plan like a general—foresees the circumstances of the conversation—surveys the ground and contingencies—detaches a question to draw you into the palpable ambuscade of his ready-made joke.

"'You were rude to her!' 'Oh, no, upon my soul, I made love to her directly.'

"'Shall you be at Lady ——'s?—I'm told the Bramin is to be there, and the new French philosopher.' 'No; it will be pleasanter at Lady ——'s conversazione—the cow with two heads will be there!'

"'I shall order my valet to shoot me, the very first thing he does in the morning.'

"A long lean man with all his limbs rambling—no way to reduce him to a compass, unless you double him like a pocket rule: with his arms spread, he'd lie on the great bed of Ware, like a cross on a Good-Friday bun, &c.

"The loadstone of true beauty draws the heaviest substances—not like the fat dowager, who frets herself into warmth to get the notice of a few *papier-maché* fops, as you rub Dutch sealing-wax to draw paper.

"'Shall I be ill to-day?—shall I be nervous?' 'Your ladyship was nervous yesterday.' 'Was I?—then I'll have a cold—I haven't had a cold this fortnight—a cold is becoming—no—I'll not have a cough; that's fatiguing—I'll be quite well.' 'You become sickness—your ladyship always looks vastly well when you're ill.'

"One who knows that no credit is ever given to his assertions has the more right to contradict his words.

"An ornament which proud peers wear all the year round—chimney-sweepers only on the 1st of May."

Some fragments of Epilogues are telling: the high carriages, that had just come into fashion, are thus sketched:

> My carriage stared at!—none so high or fine—
> Palmer's mail-coach shall be a sledge to mine.
> * * * * * * *
> No longer now the youths beside us stand,
> And talking, lean, and leaning press the hand;
> But ogling upward, as aloft we sit,
> Straining, poor things, their ankles and their wit,
> And much too short the inside to explore,
> Hang like supporters half way up the door.

The following lines appear to belong to the same Epilogue:

The Campus Martius of St. James's-street,
Where the beau's cavalry pace to and fro,
Before they take the field in Rotten-row;
Where Brookes's Blues and Waltze's Light Dragoons
Dismount in files, and ogle in platoons.

On the short duration of life, and the changes that death produces, we find—

Of that same tree which gave the box,
Now rattling in the hand of Fox,
Perhaps his coffin shall be made.

There is an extravagant Anacreontic, expressing Sheridan's love of bumpers:

Were mine a goblet that had room
For a whole vintage in its womb,
I still would have the liquor swim
An inch or two above the brim.

HEREDITARY TALENT OF THE SHERIDANS.

It would be difficult to name a family (says a living writer), in which talents have been more directly inherited, than that of the Sheridans; and this, contrary to the generally received opinion, that instances inherited from the mother are most numerous. The succession in the paternal line of the Sheridans is as follows: First, we have Dr. Thomas Sheridan, of Dublin, the friend of Swift, who was the son of another Dr. Thomas Sheridan, the elocutionist; next the famed Richard Brinsley, his son; next his son Thomas Sheridan, a man of good abilities. Among the children of this last are Lady Dufferin and the Hon. Mrs. Norton, both women of brilliant intellect; and from Lady Dufferin again comes a son, Lord Dufferin, whose Arctic Voyage has given his name the halo of talent at a very early age.

Soon after Sheridan's decease Dr. Watkins published, in a lumbering quarto, the *Memoirs*, "neither of high pretension nor of felicitous execution." Eight years later, in 1825, appeared the *Memoirs*, by Mr. Thomas Moore; and in his *Life, Letters, and Diary*, edited by Lord John Russell, lately published, it will be seen with what scrupulous care Mr. Moore collected his materials for this, his best biographical work. The *Life, Letters*, &c., have recently been condensed, and reprinted in an economical form for popular reading, and is a very charming book.

RICHARD PORSON.

RICHARD PORSON BORN.

RICHARD PORSON, "the greatest verbal critic and classical scholar of modern times," was born at the village of East Ruston, near North Walsham, in Norfolk, on Christmas Day, 1759. His father, Huggin Porson, was by trade a worsted-weaver, and combined with this the offices of parish-clerk, and apparitor to the archdeacon. Porson's mother was the daughter of a shoemaker of the neighbouring parish of Bacton.

Neither of Porson's parents had any education beyond what might be obtained at a village school in the first half of the last century; but his father was a sensible man, of strong memory, and was a good arithmetician, for he taught his son, while he was yet a child, to work sums in the common rules of arithmetic, by memory only; and before he was nine years old, enabled him, with the aid of an old book on arithmetic, to extract the cube root in that way. Porson's mother was a shrewd, clever woman; she had a taste for poetry, and could repeat many striking passages from Shakspeare, to whose works she had gained access in the library of the vicar, Mr. Hewitt, where she had been in service. He is said to have surprised her, one day, reading Congreve's *Mourning Bride*, when he kindly gave her permission to read any book in his library. Besides Richard, there were two other sons, who all seem to have had a full share of the abilities of the family. Henry, the second son, was so good an accountant that he was employed to adjust the pecuniary affairs of the Corporation of Norwich, which had got into a state of confusion. The third son became a schoolmaster at Fakenham, and was there regarded as a prodigy of talent. Their only sister became the wife of Mr. Siday Howes, brewer, of Cottishall, in Norfolk: she was described as an accomplished person;

but had the modesty and good sense to disclaim such flattery, saying, "I wish not to be brought before the public; my only ambition is, at the close of life, to have deserved the character of having been a good wife to my husband, and a good mother to my children." This modesty is worthy of remark, as bearing considerable resemblance to the sentiments of her brother Richard, who, throughout life, detested few things more than direct flattery and praise.

Mrs. Porson, the mother, died in 1784; and the father in 1806.

PORSON AT SCHOOL.

He was sent, when six years old, to the village school of Bacton, but remained there only three or four months, as being weak and tender, and rudely treated by the bigger boys.

When a child at home, he was often set to spin by his mother, when he always produced, from the same quantity of wool, more yarn, and of a better quality, than his sister or his brothers. While he was spinning, he kept a book open before him, in which he read, as well as he could, during his occupation. He is also said to have helped his mother in the cornfields at harvest-time.

He was sent, in his ninth year, to another school, in the adjoining village of Happisburgh, the master, Mr. Summers, being a good Latin scholar. The boy then wrote his name but imperfectly; but, in three months, he became the best writer in the school, and in six months as good an arithmetician as his master. The Rev. Mr. Watson, in his very interesting *Life of Richard Porson*,* thus sums up Porson's education at this place and period:

"He very early fixed his thoughts on the structure of language, and when he had once learned the English grammar, he was never known to make a grammatical error; nor did he ever seem to forget what he had once read. His love of algebra he caught from a book on the science at his father's; and he was greatly attracted by logarithms. In studying Euclid with Mr. Summers, he did not proceed with the same deliberation as his schoolfellows, but everything seemed to

* The Life of Richard Porson, M.A. Professor of Greek in the University of Cambridge, from 1792 to 1808. By the Rev. John Selby Watson, M.A., M.R.S.L. Longman and Co. 1861. This is the most comprehensive Life of Porson which has yet appeared.

come into his mind by intuition. 'On his daily return to school,' said Mr. Summers, 'it was evident that he had been thinking, when he was asleep, of his studies; for he generally came armed with some algebraic or mathematical problem solved in his own way:' a process which he adopted, to Mr. Summers's admiration, with his forty-seventh proposition of Euclid's first book. 'His temper,' Mr. Summers used to say, 'was quiet and sedate; he was reckoned unsocial among his schoolfellows, because out of school-hours he preferred his book to joining with them in their play;' though he is reported to have excelled at marbles and trap-ball.*

PORSON'S EARLY READING.

At home, Porson's father exercised his memory well by making him repeat, every evening, all the English lessons that he had learned at school during the day. He now showed an extraordinary inclination for reading all kinds of books. He borrowed from neighbours, among other works, Jewel's *Apology*, Greenwood's *England*, some volumes of the *Universal Magazine*, and an odd volume of Chambers's *Cyclopædia*.

Proofs of a serious turn of thought are extant in the shape of hymns and grave reflections, but in no respect remarkable, except for tracing out the adorable nature of the First Cause. At nine years of age, he wrote some verses on the loss of the *Peggy*, a 74-gun ship, off Happisburgh, in 1768. Three years later, he wrote, beautifully as copper-plate, the following—

ON A MOONLIGHT NIGHT.

Who can the beauties of the night describe,
When the bright moon and all the starry tribe
Emit their splendour, and, when day is gone,
Those brilliant orbs succeed it one by one?
Who can consider this but for an hour,
And not b' astonish'd at th' Almighty pow'r?
With how much regularity they're made,
And with such beauty as will never fade!
Then cease, proud man, thy own vain works to prize;
Consider what is placed in the skies:
If thou thy study unto this shouldst turn,
A lesson of humility thou'dst learn.
R. PORSON, excogitavit, Anno Domini Jes. 1771.

* Letter of the Rev. W. Gunn to Dawson Turner; Barker's *Parriana*, vol. ii.

PORSON SENT TO ETON.

The Rev. Charles Hewitt, curate of Bacton and East Ruston, hearing from the clerk, Porson's father, an account of the boy's capacity, and finding it not to be exaggerated, offered to instruct him gratuitously with his own sons. This was gladly accepted; and for three years little Porson used to trudge every Monday morning from his father's house to the vicarage, with a stock of provision for the week, which he spent under Mr. Hewitt's tuition, and returned to his father's on Saturday afternoon. Meanwhile, Porson did not forget his former master, Summers, to whom he was always grateful, and visited him in later life, whenever he was in his neighbourhood; and the old gentleman, who lived to the age of eighty-two, retained to the last his enthusiasm for his pupil.

Porson continued with Mr. Hewitt* till the age of thirteen, when his fame as a youthful prodigy came under the notice of Mr. Norris, of Witton Park, (a place some four miles from East Ruston,) the founder of the Norrisian Professorship at Cambridge. It was to Mr. Hewitt that Porson owed this introduction: he took him to Mr. Norris, and begged him to examine into his acquirements and merits. Mr. Norris, seeing nothing in the personal appearance of the lad to indicate talent, said, "Well, I see nothing particular in this heavy-looking boy, but I confide in your account of his talents."

Still, he sent Porson to a Mr. Carthew, a clergyman and magistrate of Woodbridge, in Suffolk, begging him to undertake the task of examining him; Mr. Carthew declined the responsibility, and referred him to Lambert, then Greek Professor at Cambridge, who was requested to investigate thoroughly the boy's qualifications. He was, accordingly, sent at once to Cambridge, and examined by Lambert himself. It had been intended, if the report was favourable, that Porson should be sent to the Charter-house, on the foundation, if a nomination could be obtained. The examination was pretty strict; and all the examiners gave so favourable a report of the boy's knowledge and abilities, that Mr. Norris at once determined on providing for his education, so as to

* This Mr. Hewitt seems to have been a very remarkable man. He is said to have taught Mr. Summers all he knew; and with an income of 200*l.* a year, he brought up five sons at the University, four of whom became fellows of their respective colleges; the fifth died an undergraduate.—*Luard.*

fit him for the University; and it being found impossible to get him into the Charter-house, he was entered at Eton.

A good deal of interest seems to have been raised about the lad at Cambridge. Mr. Hewitt, in a letter to Professor Lambert, speaks of having had "the orderly and good boy" under his care for almost two years; during which time he had been chiefly employed on Corderius's *Colloquies*, Cæsar, Ovid, Horace, and Virgil, and mathematics, "in which science," says Mr. Hewitt, "Porson had made such proficiency before he came to me, as to be able to solve questions out of the *Ladies' Diary*, to the great astonishment of a very able mathematician in these parts. In Greek, he was only learning the verbs."

Porson's personal appearance at this time is described by Mr. Carthew, who, in a letter to Lambert, says, "You will find the lad rather an unwinning cub, than otherwise; but you will, I doubt not, make allowance for the awkwardness of his manners."

Mr. Beloe, in his *Sexagenarian*, mentions that Porson's family frequently spoke of this circumstance of his being sent to Cambridge, but treats it as a story not worthy of the least credit. Fortunately, Professor Lambert, who was still living when that work appeared, left a full detail of all the circumstances, with the letters alluded to above, which is preserved in the library of Trinity College. He concludes: "Porson returned home. But how long he remained under Mr. Hewitt's charge; by what means his patronage became afterwards so extensive; or in what manner he accumulated that stupendous mass of knowledge in a language of which, in the beginning of 1773, he was only studying the verbs, I cannot say."

PORSON'S ETON DAYS.

Porson was entered on the foundation of Eton in August, 1774. He had not a very pleasant recollection of his days here. Mr. Maltby mentions that he declared he learnt nothing while there; adding, "before I went there, I could repeat nearly by heart all the books which we used to read in the school." The only thing in his Eton course which he recollected with pleasure, was rat-hunting—and he used to dwell with delight on the rat-hunts in the Long Chamber.

The promise, too, that Porson had given of his future

excellence seems at Eton rather to have gone off. His composition especially was weak, and his ignorance of quantity kept him far behind many of his inferiors: some specimens of his Eton exercises are still in existence. He is described, too, as being prone to conceits in his verses, and to have been fond of mixing Greek with his Latin: Dr. Goodall, when Provost of Eton, in his evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons, spoke of Porson's school exercises as being very inferior to more than one of his schoolfellows, and mentioned the Marquis Wellesley as infinitely his superior in composition.

Mr. Kidd says that Porson, when he entered Eton, was "wholly ignorant of quantity;" and that "after he had toiled up the arduous path to literary eminence, he was often twitted by his quondam schoolfellows with violations of quantity."

He continued, however, to be fond of reading. Jonathan Raine, a brother of Dr. Matthew Raine, Porson's firm friend throughout life, was one of his schoolfellows at Eton, and was possessed of a Shakspeare, which Porson, having none of his own, was ever eager to borrow. When Raine, who kept it locked up, was reluctant to lend it, Porson would take his knife out of his pocket, and say, "Come, now, give us your key, or I shall pick the lock." (*Watson's Life.*)

One of the earliest instances of his great power of memory is recorded of this date. He was going up one day, with the rest of his form, to say a lesson in Horace, but not being able to find his book at the time, took one which was thrust into his hand by another boy. He was called upon to construe, and went on with great accuracy; but the master observed that he did not seem to be looking at that part of the page in which was the lesson. He therefore took the book from his hand to examine it, and found it to be an English translation of Ovid's Metamorphoses. Porson was good-humouredly desired to continue his construing, and finished the lesson without erring in a single word.

He was a popular boy among his schoolfellows, and two dramas which he wrote for performance in the Long Chamber are still remembered. One of these, called *Out of the Frying-pan into the Fire*, is preserved in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge: it is in three acts, and consists chiefly of songs. The story is Friar Bacon's attempt to defend Britain by building a wall of brass round it; but

Porson has substituted Dr. Faustus for Friar Bacon; and Lucifer and Satan are distinct personages. The author played "Punch, servant to Faustus," who thus parodies a song of his master's:

> If a master you have, he's the plague of your life,
> For with him you have nought but contention and strife;
> Go on fast as you can, he would have you go faster:
> Oh! what a plague is a whimsical master,
> Ordering and bothering,
> Stripping and whipping—
> Oh! what a plague is a whimsical master!

Vulcan and Punch, and his wife Joan, have much talk and singing in the second act. In the third, Punch and Joan are frying over the fire the head—not Friar Bacon's—there is the old "Time is, was, and is gone"—it falls into the fire, and bursts—and Punch and his wife are at last driven off by Satan and Lucifer to Tartarus.

Porson's wit and humour showed themselves at Eton: he observed of a boy named Murphitt, of ungainly figure, that he never need be in want of a corkscrew, as he had only to swallow a tenpenny nail, and the sinuosities of his frame, as it passed through, would twist it into an excellent shape for a corkscrew.

Porson also wrote some satiric verses to Charles Simeon, a coxcomb in dress—addressed "To the ugliest boy in Dr. Davies's dominions."

Yet, Porson seems to have disappointed his friends, as Lord Nelson's brother, who was at Eton with him, brought back word that *they thought nothing of the Norfolk boy.*

His patron, Mr. Norris, died in 1777; but he found another in Sir George Baker, the celebrated physician. Besides his heavy loss in the death of Mr. Norris, a worse misfortune befel Porson while a schoolboy—the formation of an imposthume in the lungs, which, though conquered at the time, made his health weak for life, and for a large portion of his days made him subject to asthma.

Sir George Baker was President of the College of Physicians, and was as much distinguished by his own classical taste and acquirements as by his laudable disposition to cherish learning in others. He received the boy into his house for a vacation, and undertook, at the request of a relation of Mr. Norris, the disagreeable task of collecting, in small sums, as much as was sufficient to purchase an income of 80*l.* a-year,

for a few years, in the short annuities, which served, with great economy, to enable Porson to remain at Eton. This favour appears to have been too great to have been properly acknowledged, or perhaps even duly appreciated, by its object, who only after many years paid Sir George the tardy compliment of a dedication of a single play of Euripides!

Among the contributors were Bishop Bagot; another bishop, whose name is not unknown; Sir George Baker; Dr. Poynter, and Dr. Hammond, a prebendary of Norwich; and Mrs. Mary Turner, a granddaughter of Sir George Turner, and relative of Mr. Norris. This lady took a great liking to Porson, paid him constant attention, and gave him permission, when he should return from school for the holidays, to pass them with her.

At Eton, it was a copy of Toup's *Longinus*, presented to him as a reward for a good exercise, that first gave him a decided inclination for the pursuit of classical researches; but he always considered Bentley and Davis as his great masters in criticism.

PORSON AT CAMBRIDGE.

After remaining at Eton four years, Porson was entered at Trinity College, in October, 1778.

His college studies have been thus summed up:—At first, he began to apply more particularly to mathematics, which had been the favourite study of his boyhood, and in which, as he himself remarked, his proficiency first brought him into a certain degree of public notice. He was, however, soon diverted from this pursuit, although he attained a place amongst the *senior optimes* of his year. But he was, in fact, more calculated for classical than for mathematical excellence. His memory would have been in a great measure thrown away, if he had been employed in abstract calculations; and his inventive powers do not appear to have been at all of the same class with his retentive faculties; although, certainly, in the mechanical pursuit of the fashionable methods of modern analysis, which are intended, like steam-engines, to overcome all difficulties by the inanimate force of mere patience and perseverance, he was capable of filling as distinguished a place as any living algebraist. The classical prize medal, and the university scholarship, he obtained without difficulty, as matters of course. The exercise which he exhibited upon the examination for the scholarship is the well-known translation

of an epitaph into Greek iambics; which, although not free from some inaccuracies in the use of the tenses, is still a very remarkable production, when it is considered as having been completed in less than an hour, with the help of Morrell's *Thesaurus* only, and never afterwards corrected.—(*Dr. Young.*)

Mr. Luard gives this life-like picture of Porson's associates at Cambridge:—In whatever society he found himself, he would make himself equally popular and agreeable—his friends in London, the *juventus academica* at Cambridge, a stray drover in Smithfield, or a bargee on the Cam, would find equal delight in his society, and would feel equal surprise at the varied nature of his attainments. He was regarded by all as a species of wonder, and many of the leading men of the day made efforts to become acquainted with him. This, however, he never could endure; and he positively refused to make Fox's acquaintance, although the latter put himself to considerable inconvenience to see him. He did not want to be stared at, he said. A curious anecdote is told of him, which illustrates this feeling. Two gentlemen, on arriving at Cambridge in the evening, went and called on Porson: he instantly ordered his bed-maker to bring candles. As soon as they were produced, he coolly took them and placed them on either side of himself, and said, supposing, no doubt, they had come to see him merely out of curiosity, "Now, then, gentlemen, take a view of me!" Direct praise, of which he had plenty in all the reviews and publications of his day, he utterly despised; and Dr. Parr's pompous paragraphs, or Lord Byron's high-flown praise, only made him angry. The writer possesses what illustrates this, and his own beautiful handwriting at the same time—a very curious letter to him from a gentleman of Trinity College, Dublin, written in a very fulsome style of adulation; for instance: "To have seen and conversed with Professor Porson would alone have accomplished the object of my visit to Cambridge, though it was a favour I durst hardly have promised myself. But to have enjoyed his society and been distinguished by his kindness, to have been indulged in a close and almost familiar intercourse with him, was such a gratification as I shall not risk offending you by attempting to describe," &c. Porson has written in the stamp in the corner of the page (a space not so large as a sixpence), "Dear Sir,—I shall not attempt to return you the too flattering compliments, for which I am more indebted to your goodness than to your judgment."

HIS CRITICAL STUDIES.

He began his critical career (says Mr. Luard,) while an undergraduate; and it was doubtless during the period of his residence at Cambridge, that his marvellous stores of learning were laid up for future use; and now that he had achieved his independence, and a position * which of all others gave him opportunity for pursuing the studies to which he had devoted himself, he turned his thoughts to publication. Accident seems rather to have led him to the tragedians, as at that time the knowledge of the Greek drama was at a very low ebb; if we except Markland's three plays of Euripides, and Musgrave's ponderous complete edition of the same author, scarcely anything had been done directly for them by an English editor since Stanley's time; and we believe that the first occasion on which Porson appeared in print was in a short critique on Schutz's *Æschylus*, in a review started by his friend Maty, a Fellow of Trinity, senior by a few years to Porson. This was written in 1783, while he was a middle Bachelor; and he continued to contribute to the review till its extinction some four years afterwards. But at this period of his life his chief attention was devoted to *Æschylus*. Stanley's edition having become very scarce, and he having left eight ponderous folios of MSS., with full materials for a second edition, the syndics of the Cambridge Press determined upon a new edition, of which Stanley's was to be the basis. Of course, the editorship was offered to Porson; but, on finding that Stanley's corrupt text was to be followed, and all the trash that such worthless men as Pauw had written on the poet was to be incorporated in the edition, he declined to undertake it on such terms. He was very anxious to be sent to Florence to collate the Victorian or Medicean MSS., without which no really satisfactory edition of Æschylus was possible; but one of the syndics, whose name it is a great pity has not been preserved, suggested that Mr. Porson might *collect* his MSS. at home.

This completely put a stop to all hope of encouragement from a similar quarter, and the ties that bound him to Cambridge seem to have become weaker from this time. He had before this begun a correspondence with the veteran scholar

* The only office Porson ever held in college was that of "Sublector Secundus," in 1784–5.

of Leyden, David Ruhnken, then at the close of his life; and wishing to show Ruhnken that, in his intended edition of Æschylus, he had not undertaken a task for which he was unequal, he sent him, as a specimen of his powers in emendatory criticism, his restoration of two passages in Plutarch and Æschylus, by each other's help. This is one of the earliest, as well as one of the most brilliant, of all Porson's emendations. If it be remembered that this was done by a young man at the age of three-and-twenty, it shows an amount of learning, mingled with the power of applying it, at that age, that it would be vain to seek for elsewhere.—*H. R. Luard, M.A., Cambridge Essays*, 1857.

PORSON DECLINES TO TAKE ORDERS.

This was a critical period. By the statutes of Trinity College, all Fellows, with two exceptions, are required to be in Priest's Orders within seven years of their Master's degree; and, in the year 1792, Porson had to decide upon his course. Now, the case of a person taking Holy Orders, merely to keep a Fellowship, while he feels himself unfit for the duties which he undertakes, or has a difficulty about the creeds he has to subscribe and inculcate, is very rare; and if any one resigns his emoluments in this way, he is only supposed to show common honesty. But it was a different thing seventy years ago—when there was a great want of principle among the heads of the universities, and a lax character among the clergy; all this makes the refusal to which Porson made up his mind to decline to take orders, an evidence of honesty and truthfulness of no ordinary kind.

But Porson was not the man to subscribe to doctrines that he did not believe, or to undertake duties for which he felt himself to be unfit; according to Mr. Maltby, Porson is stated to have said:—"I found that I should require *about fifty years' reading* to make myself thoroughly acquainted with divinity—to satisfy my mind on all points—and therefore I gave it up. There are Fellows who go into a pulpit, assuming everything, and knowing nothing; but *I* would not do so."

Thus, when the choice had to be made between independence and a comfortable income, with sacrifice of conscience on the one hand, and penury, with the preservation of honesty, on the other, after having fairly considered the subject in

all its bearings, Porson saw what his course must be, and resigned his Fellowship, without having anything in the world to look forward to for his support. What made the case peculiarly trying was, that the means open to the College for keeping him still one of its body, offered themselves, by the vacancy of one of the Lay Fellowships at the time, to which he naturally thought himself entitled. But this, although it had been promised to Porson, was given to another; and he was coldly and unfeelingly recommended to take Orders. The interview that he had with the Master (Dr. Postlethwaite) was a very curious one, and to it Porson frequently referred in after life. A partial account of this meeting will be found in Mr. Dyce's *Porsoniana*, p. 308, given on the authority of the late Mr. Maltby.

The words put into Porson's mouth, "I am come, sir, to inform you that my Fellowship will become vacant in a few weeks, *in order that you may appoint my successor*," Mr. Luard considers can hardly be correct.

The meeting took place at Dr. Vincent's house, the deanery at Westminster, where Dr. Postlethwaite had gone to examine for the Westminster scholarships. Postlethwaite trembled very much—could hardly stand, and supported himself by the pillar near him. Porson said afterwards, that not for all the Indies would he have the feelings that then agitated the Doctor's frame. He afterwards repeated, in speaking of the circumstance, the seventh chapter of Job. Mr. Beloe tells us that the anguish he expressed at the gloom of his prospects, without a sixpence in the world, his grief, and finally his tears, excited an expression of sympathy which could never be forgotten. About this time he is described as saying that he used frequently "to lie awake through the whole night, and wish for a large pearl."

But his down-heartedness did not last long; for he is described as soon after observing, with his usual good-humour, that he was a gentleman living in London, without a sixpence in his pocket. "But," says Mr. Luard, "there is no doubt that the treatment he received at this time, and his disappointment, permanently affected his spirits, and gave a saturnine turn to his mind. He is said, at this time, to have lived three weeks on a single guinea."

He was thus deprived of his Fellowship in 1791, having no dependence left for his subsistence through life but his own abilities and acquirements. His friends, however, did

not abandon him on this urgent occasion, and in order to keep him out of actual want, a private subscription was set on foot, to which Mr. Cracherode was one of the principal contributors, and by which enough was raised to purchase him an annuity of about 100*l.* a year for life. A small addition was made to his income, as we shall presently relate, by his election to the Greek Professorship at Cambridge, with a salary of only 40*l.* a year. The situation, however, gave him the option of at least doubling his whole receipts, by the delivery of an annual course of lectures in the university; and it was supposed that he would have made this exertion, if he had not been discouraged by the difficulty of obtaining rooms in his college, where it would have been his wish to reside.

PORSON AND THE "MORNING CHRONICLE."

One of Porson's fast friends was Mr. Perry, who added to his comforts in various ways, but especially in affording him a home whenever he desired to change his solitude; and the transit from the loneliness of Essex-court, in the Middle Temple, to the friendly blaze in Lancaster-court, in the Strand, must have been a beneficial change. In return, Porson contributed many witty pieces to his friend's paper, the *Morning Chronicle*, when satire and humour entered far more largely into the columns of newspapers than they do at present. "Greek and Latin," says Mr. Luard, "were not so entirely banished as they are now, and it is by no means improbable that the columns of the *Morning Chronicle* were indebted to Porson's pen to a far greater extent than has been usually supposed, or than can be ascertained at present. And so far were these contributions supposed to have extended, that he has been accused of 'giving up to Perry what he owed the world.'"

There was "a little democratic closet" fitted up for the wits at the *Morning Chronicle* office, and here they shone with wonderful lustre.* Mr. Luard traces some of Porson's pieces, preserved in the *Spirit of the Public Journals*. The *Imitations*

* The office of the *Morning Chronicle* was then, and until 1822, at the present 143, Strand, subsequently the office of the *Mirror*. The *Chronicle*, after its classic attraction had declined, was esteemed for its bibliographical information, due to the taste of its editor, John Black.

of Horace are certainly his, and admirable specimens of his dry humour they are (the war, and the alarm as to revolutionary principles, are the real subjects throughout); and, independently of this, the translations are executed in a clever, off-hand way. We give the following as an extract from one of his humorous introductions:

"Having myself studied this poet with uncommon attention, I have, with all my might, endeavoured to preserve these qualities in my version, of which I send you the inclosed ode as a specimen. If you judge it to have less merit than the partial parent believes, you will still allow it, I hope, to soar above the common flight of modern poetry. It is not heavy as lead, like Mr. ——; nor dull as ditch-water, like Anna Matilda; nor mad as a March hare, like our present excellent Laureate; nor stupid—but I should never make an end, if I went on with my comparisons. If this sample takes, I mean to publish a translation of the whole by subscription: it will be printed on wire-wove paper, and hot-pressed—not to exceed two volumes quarto. A great number of engravings will be added by the most eminent artists. . . . The passages which have an improper political tendency will be carefully omitted. . . . But these passages are very few, and shall be studiously suppressed. Luckily, Horace is full of loyal effusions, which I shall endeavour to render with spirit as well as fidelity."

Occasionally, Porson was irreverent in these papers: the "Hymn by a newly-made Peer," signed T. Sternhold, is from Porson's pen; as is "The Orgies of Bacchus." They abound with wit, learning, attacks on the war, and perpetual accusations of treason. Sometimes their irony misled well-meaning folks, as when Mr. Kidd, to any one intending to read them, gives the old advice, "Don't." Now, these papers may be foolish and profane, and unlike anything else Porson wrote before or after, they were the exception, not the rule, of his life.

It was in the *Morning Chronicle*, also, that appeared the well-known version of the "Three children sliding on the Ice," signed "S. England," in sarcastic allusion to the Ireland Shakspeare forgeries which were then rife upon the public attention. Porson introduced this Greek version of the nursery song in a letter to the editor, as a fragment of an old parchment discovered in the false bottom of a trunk—being "neither more nor less than some of the lost tragedies

of Sophocles," writing difficult, and traces somewhat faded! "It is an old saying that has appeared among mankind, that you cannot be certain of the life of mortals, before one dies, whether it be good or evil." These qualities are too conspicuous in the following iambics, which contain a seasonable caution to parents against rashly trusting children out of their sight. (Then follow the Greek, Latin, and English versions.)

Porson was exhorted by the author of *Pursuits of Literature* to write no more for Perry's paper. "It is beneath you," adds Matthias; "I speak seriously. I know your abilities. It may do well enough for Joseph Richardson, Esq., author of the comedy of the *Fugitive*, if a certain political dramatist's (Sheridan's) compotations will leave him any abilities at all, which I begin to doubt."

EPIGRAMS ON PITT.

It was in the *Morning Chronicle* that the hundred and one epigrams appeared, which Porson is said to have written in one night, about Pitt and Dundas getting drunk in the House of Commons, on the evening when a message was to be delivered from his Majesty relative to the war with France. The story goes—that when the minister and his friend appeared before the House, Pitt tried to speak, but, showing himself unable, was kindly pulled down into his seat by those about him; Dundas, who was equally unfitted for eloquence, had sense enough left to sit silent! Perry witnessed the scene, and on his return from the House, gave a description of it to Porson, who, being vastly amused, called for pen and ink, and musing over his pipe and tankard, produced the one hundred and one pieces of verse before the day dawned. The point of most of them lies in puns. The first epigram is,

> That *Ca Ira* in England will prevail,
> All sober men deny with heart and hand;
> To talk of *going* sure's a pretty tale,
> When e'en our rulers can't as much as stand.

The following are better:

> Your gentle brains with full libations drench;
> You've then Pitt's title to the Treasury Bench.
> Your foe in war to overrate,
> A maxim is of ancient date;

Then sure 'twas right in time of trouble,
That our good rulers should see double.
The mob are beasts, exclaims the King of Daggers: *
What creature's he that's troubled with the staggers?

When Billy found he scarce could stand,
Help! Help! he cried, and stretched his hand,
To faithful Harry calling:
Quoth Hal, My friend, I'm sorry for't;
'Tis not my practice to support
A minister that's falling.

"Whose up?" inquired Burke of a friend at the door;
"Oh! no one," says Paddy; "though Pitt's *on the floor*."

Porson said that "Pitt carefully considered his sentences before he uttered them; but that Fox threw himself into the middle of his, and left it to God Almighty to get him out again." (Porson was thinking of Sterne: "I begin with writing the first sentence, and trusting to God Almighty for the second.")—*Rogers's Table Talk, note.*

HOW PORSON GOT MARRIED.

At one time it was expected that Porson would marry the sister of Dr. Raine, of the Charter-house; but the Doctor did not approve of the match, so it was broken off, and Porson's friends set him down as a confirmed bachelor. However, he thought otherwise.

He had been long intimate with Perry, the proprietor and editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, who had a widowed sister, Mrs. Lunan. One night, in 1795, while Porson was smoking his pipe with his friend, George Gordon, at the Cider-cellar, he abruptly said, "Friend George, do you think the widow Lunan an agreeable sort of personage, as times go?" Gordon assented. "In that case," replied Porson, "you must meet me to-morrow morning at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields,† at eight o'clock;" and without saying more, Porson paid his reckoning, and went home.

Now, Gordon, knowing Porson to be likely to mean what he said, strange as it was, next morning repaired to the church, and there found Porson with Mrs. Lunan, and a female friend, and the parson waiting to begin the ceremony.

* Burke.—"The swinish multitude."

† Pryse Lockhart Gordon, who relates this story, is mistaken in the church; for Mr. Watson could not find Porson's marriage entered in the register of St. Martin's.

The service being ended, the bride and her friend retired by one door of the church, and Porson and Gordon by another.

It appeared that Porson had some time before proposed to Mrs. Lunan, but one condition was that they were to be married without her brother Perry's knowledge; to this she was unwilling, but finding that Porson was obstinate on this point, she consented. Now that the ceremony had been performed, Gordon proposed that Porson should declare his marriage to Perry,—but he refused, and they parted. However, Porson returned, and said, "Friend George, I shall for once take advice, which, as you know, I seldom do, and hold out the olive-branch, provided you will accompany me to the Court of Lancaster; for you are a good peace-maker." Lancaster-court, in the Strand, was then Perry's place of residence, and hence Porson facetely called him "My Lord of Lancaster." Gordon agreed. They found Perry at home, Porson won him over with a speech, a dinner was provided, and an apartment was prepared for the newly-married couple.

After dinner, however, Porson contrived to slip away from the party, and, according to Beloe, spent the rest of the day with a learned friend, afterwards a judge; but not a word did he say of his marriage, nor did he attempt to leave till the family were about to retire for the night; when, an acquaintance of Barker's asserted, Porson adjourned to the Cider-cellar, where he stayed till 8 o'clock next morning.

It appears that Porson had been met by a friend in the morning in Covent Garden, dressed in a pea-green coat; but he did not say a word of his just having been married. His head was running upon books: he was carrying a copy of *Le Moyen de Parvenir*, which he had just purchased off a stall; and holding it up, he called out jokingly, "These are the sort of books to buy."

Porson treated his wife with all the kindness of which he was capable; and Kidd tells us that "he evidently became more attentive to times and seasons, and might have been won by domestic comforts from the habit of tippling." He was not an unkind husband, or Perry would scarcely have continued his friend. The lady died of a decline in April, 1797, about a year and a half after her marriage.

"THE CIDER-CELLAR."

As the Cider-cellar is often mentioned as Porson's haunt, it may be well to state that this is a night-tavern of some

standing, near the west end of Maiden-lane, Covent Garden, and opposite the site of the house in which J. M. W. Turner, the celebrated landscape painter, was born—his father being a hair-dresser. The Cider-cellar was opened about 1730; a curious tract, entitled *Adventures underground*, 1750, contains strange notices of this "midnight concert-room." We remember the place not many years after Porson's death, when it was, as its name implies, in the basement, to which you descended by a stair-ladder to the concert-room, which, in another house, would have been the kitchen, or the cellar; and the fittings of the place were rude and rough: over the mantelpiece was a large mezzotint portrait of Porson, framed, which we take to be the missing portrait mentioned by the Rev. Mr. Watson, in his recently published *Life of Porson*. The Cider-cellar is now, altogether, a more extensive concern than it was in Porson's time.

One of his companions at the Cider-cellar is said to have shouted before him, "Dick can beat us all: he can drink all night, and spout all day," which greatly pleased the Professor.

His preference of this tavern is accounted for by his love of *cider*, the patronymic drink for which the place was once famous.

In the first floor of the adjoining house was located, not many years since, the *Fielding Club*, a society of authors and artists, mostly; prominent amongst whom was Albert Smith, ever ready with his lively and harmless rattle, without a grain of ill-nature in a night's patter and pleasant humour.

A DESTRUCTIVE FIRE.

In 1796, while Porson was on a visit to his friend Perry, at Merton, a fire broke out in his house, which destroyed a performance of ten months' labour. He had borrowed the manuscript of the Greek Lexicon, compiled by Photius, from the library of Trinity College, Cambridge, engaging to make a complete copy of it. This is an extremely valuable transcript, and Porson carried it with him wherever he went. On the morning of the fire, when he set out from Merton on a ride to London, he took with him the manuscript, but left the transcript, which he had just finished, behind him. He had, however, misgivings on the road, as to the safety of his books and papers; and once he actually turned back his horse's

head, but, at length, proceeded on his journey. At night, during his absence, the fire occurred, and the copy was destroyed. Dr. Raine was the first to inform Porson of his loss, when he inquired if any lives were lost. The Doctor replied in the negative. "Then," rejoined Porson, "I will tell you what I have lost, twenty years of my life;" repeating at the same time from Gray:

> To each his sufferings; all are men,
> Condemned alike to groan,
> The tender for another's pain,
> The unfeeling for his own.

Porson calmly sat down to write the transcript over again, which he accomplished as accurately as the first; and the manuscript, a quarto volume, he deposited in the library of his College. A few fragments of the first Photius were saved from the fire, and are preserved at Cambridge as curiosities.

Among the effects destroyed at the same time were a copy of Kuster's Aristophanes, the margins of which were filled with notes and emendations; besides other literary treasures.

SIR JOHN HAWKINS SHOWN UP.

An admirable specimen of Porson's peculiar view of ironical treatment appeared, in 1787, in three panegyrical letters in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, on Sir John Hawkins's *Life of Johnson*. These are wonderful compositions, and abound with delicate touches of satirical humour; and they show Porson's extensive acquaintance with the English dramatists, especially with Shakspeare. Mr. Luard gives these two extracts as specimens:* the first begins thus:

MR. URBAN,

HAVE you read that divine book, the *Life of Samuel Johnson, LL. D.* by Sir John Hawkins, Knight? Have you done anything but read it since it was first published? For my own part, I scruple not to declare that I could not rest till I had read it all through, notes, digression, index, and all; then I could not rest till I had gone over it a second time. I begin to think that increase of appetite grows by what it feeds on, for I have been reading it ever since. I am now in the midst of the sixteenth perusal, and I still discover new beauties. I can think of nothing else, I can talk of nothing else. In short, *my mind is become tumid, and longs to be delivered of those many and great concep-*

* The humour of these consists very much in the use that is made of Hawkins's absurd and bombastic language. The passages italicised are from Hawkins's book; the quotations from Shakspeare will be easily recognised.

times with which it has laboured since I have been through a course of this most perfect *exemplar* of biography. The compass of learning, the extent and accuracy of information, the judicious criticisms, the moral reflections, the various opinions, legal and political, to say nothing of that excess of candour and charity that breathes throughout the work, make together such a collection of sweets that the sense aches at them. To crown all, *the language is refined to a degree of immaculate purity, and displays the whole force of turgid eloquence.* Johnson, to be sure, was thought for a while to have a knack at life-writing; but who, in his senses, would compare him to our Knight? . . .

Again, from the beginning of the third letter:—

MR. URBAN,

Two canons of criticism are undisputed; that an author cannot fail to use the best possible word on every occasion, and that a critic cannot choose but know what that word is. And if these rules hold good in words, why not in sentences? These points being granted, it follows, that whenever Sir John Hawkins, in quoting any part of Johnson's works, adopts a reading different from that of the edition, it is to be replaced in the text, and the other discarded. Now to apply. . . In the last number of the *Rambler*, Johnson says, or is made to say, "I have endeavoured to refine our language to *grammatical purity*." How tame, dull, flat, lifeless, insipid, prosaic, &c. is this, compared to what the Knight has substituted—*grammar and purity!* a fine instance of the figure *Hen dia duoin!* like Virgil's *pateris et auro;* or like . . . . In the same *Rambler*, Johnson says, "On this part of my work I look back with pleasure, which no blame or praise of man shall diminish or augment." Here the Knight has excelled himself. He has made an emendation hardly inferior to some of Warburton's upon Shakspeare; and, by throwing out two idle words, has restored the sentence to its original vigour—"no praise of man shall diminish or augment." From this passage, thus corrected, we learn that praise, when bestowed by some people, is a disgrace; a truth which the world never thoroughly perceived before some executors of their friend's fame appeared. . . .

"THE THREE HEAVENLY WITNESSES."

In 1788 and 1789, Porson wrote in the *Gentleman's Magazine* the letters on the Three Heavenly Witnesses, which, enlarged and re-written, afterwards formed the volume of *Letters to Travis.*

The Rev. Mr. Luard observes: "With hardly an exception, every person worthy of the name of a critic, from Erasmus to Newton and Bentley, who had examined the question, had decided on the spuriousness of the seventh verse of the fifth chapter of St. John's first epistle, and even such critics as Bengelius and Mill, who, after giving every conceivable amount of evidence against the genuineness of the verse, decide in its favour, are obliged to resort to such absurd theories as that it was withdrawn from the books by the

disciplina arcani of the Church, till it was gradually lost, or else content themselves with rhapsodies on the innate beauty of the passage. And thus Gibbon, having occasion to speak of the verse, says,—'The three witnesses have been established in our Greek Testaments by the prudence of Erasmus; the honest bigotry of the Complutensiam editors; the typographical fraud or error of Robert Stephens in the placing a crotchet, and the deliberate falsehood or strange misapprehension of Theodore Beza.' And probably, as Porson remarks, although the historian must have foreseen many attacks upon other parts of his work, he apprehended none on this passage. In this, however, he was disappointed. Mr. Archdeacon Travis, a person, according to Dr. Turton, utterly unqualified for critical inquiries, though he considers him to have been a man of some talent and attainments, determined to win a transient popularity by a defence of the spurious verse. And the infidel opinions which characterised the *Decline and Fall*, made the public receive with eagerness anything in the shape of argument on the other side.

"The letters reprinted from the *Gentleman's Magazine*, in a thick octavo, were widely read, going through several editions in the course of a short space of time. And thus this worthless book, conspicuous for the most disgraceful ignorance and blunders which the veriest tyro in theology could have hardly committed, coupled with glaring bad faith and shameless accusations of many of the greatest men of past times, (*e.g.* St. Jerome, Erasmus, Sir I. Newton, &c.) at the same time that its author had the impudence to say, that 'Truth was the sole aim, object, and end of his Letters,' was conceived to have reopened a question considered long ago settled, and to have dealt a heavy blow at the reputation of the infidel historian. Such conduct as this was what most offended and roused the deep love of truth, and contempt for sciolism and pretence, that characterised Porson—to show how enormous Mr. Travis's demerits were. And at length, in 1790, the collected volume of *Letters to Travis* appeared. It has set the question completely at rest, and it is not too much to say that such a body of evidence against the verse is collected, that the genuineness of no passage of Scripture rests on a firmer basis than does the spuriousness of this. The line of argument taken up by the few defenders the verse has found, has been as foolish as it is dishonest, and they have usually written as if the doctrine supported by it would be imperilled by its loss. The true

spirit in which to engage in the controversy, is best given in the noble words of Bentley,—'If the fourth century knew that text, let it come in, in God's name: but if that age did not know it, then Arianism in its height was beat down without the help of that verse—and let the *fact* prove as it will, the *doctrine* is unshaken.'

"The book, however, had by no means a large circulation—certainly very inferior to Mr. Travis's. Porson received but 30*l.* for it, and the bookseller is even said to have been the loser of the transaction—so careless or wilful is the world about truth, especially if that truth chance to be unpopular. 'It is much easier,' to use Porson's own words, 'to go on believing everything that we hear or read, than to undergo the labour of inquiry, or the pain of suspense.' But it produced worse consequences to its author. There seems to have been a considerable prejudice excited against him in consequence of the book. Mr. Kidd tells a story (rather obscurely and incomprehensibly) of some one who intimated 'the great danger of encouraging a scholar who read Greek in Mr. Porson's method.' And the old lady, Mrs. Turner, of Norwich, already mentioned, who had been exceedingly fond of Porson as a child, and had left him a legacy of 300*l.*, cut it down to 30*l.* on being told by some scoundrel that he had written a book against Christianity, *i.e.*, the *Letters to Travis!* But even then, with all whose opinions were really worth anything, and ever since, it has placed him in the highest rank of literary fame. With regard to his own opinions on the doctrine in question, he said to a friend, on being asked what he thought of the evidence afforded by the New Testament in favour of Socinian doctrines, 'If the New Testament is to determine the question, and words have any meaning, the Socinians are wrong.'* Moreover, in reading the book before us, it must be recollected that Porson throws himself entirely on what he calls the unorthodox side, defining, by the orthodox opinion, 'that opinion which, whether true or false, prevails in the time and country of the transcribers or editors.' Again, when he uses the word orthodoxy in a bad sense, he does not mean that respectable orthodoxy which defends the doctrine of the Trinity with fair and genuine Scripture, but that spurious orthodoxy which is the overflowing of zeal without knowledge," &c.†

* *Quarterly Review*, vol. xxxiii. p. 99.

† Selected and abridged from the Cambridge Essay.

Of this class of Porson's labours, it has been well observed: "The articles which he furnished to the journals of his day are models of keen and accurate censure. The bitter, indeed, prevails over the sweet in their composition; but it should be remembered that Porson was rarely the assailant in the first instance. Travis indeed he singled out for the target of his wit and invective; but the presumptuous archdeacon had assailed with blunt and borrowed weapons the greatest historian of English birth; and Porson, while he defended Gibbon, asserted also the right of free inquiry against the prejudices of churchmen and the servile obedience of those who cannot give reasons for their belief."—*Spectator* review.

PORSON'S PROFESSORSHIP.

In 1792, the Regius Professorship of Greek at Cambridge became vacant; but the news gave Porson more "vexation and chagrin than hope and satisfaction," for he had long ceased to look forward to his succeeding to the chair. However, his friends pressed him, and he consented to become a candidate, when thinking subscription to the Articles necessary to enable him to hold the office, he wrote to the Master of Trinity as follows:

"The same reason which hindered me from keeping my Fellowship by the method you obligingly pointed out to me, would, I am greatly afraid, prevent me from being Greek Professor. Whatever concern this may give me for myself, it gives me none for the public. I trust there are at least twenty or thirty in the University equally able and willing to undertake the office; possessed, many of talents superior to mine, and all of a more complying conscience. This I speak upon the supposition that the next Greek Professor will be compelled to read lectures; but if the place remains a sinecure, the number of qualified persons will be greatly increased. And though it was even granted that my industry and attention might possibly produce some benefit to the interest of learning and the credit of the University, that trifling gain would be as much exceeded by keeping the Professorship a sinecure, and bestowing it on a sound believer, as temporal considerations are outweighed by spiritual."

Subscription was not, however, requisite, and Porson was

elected to the office by the unanimous vote of the seven electors: he took for his prelection Euripides, the composition occupying him only two days. This diatribe contains a brief sketch of the comparative merits of the three tragedians of Greece, pointing out, with great skill, the distinguishing characteristics of each; and a writer very well able to judge has stated, that no previous treatment of the subject can be compared with this dissertation for judgment, acuteness, elegance, or precision. In his comparison of them, he considers Æschylus to be the greater poet, but Sophocles and Euripides to have composed better dramas.

The salary of the Professorship was but 40*l.* a-year, having remained the same although the value of money had altered so much from the time of its foundation, so that Porson's income was not materially increased by this appointment.

THE "HECUBA" OF EURIPIDES.

After Porson had held the Greek Professorship for some five years, he turned his thoughts definitely to publication, and in 1797 the *Hecuba* of Euripides appeared—a small, ill-looking pamphlet of seventy-five pages, published in London, and anonymous. It was preceded by a preface of sixteen pages, in which he gave some specimens of his powers on the subject of Greek metres. He here pointed out the correct method of writing several words previously incorrectly written, and expelled that "monstrous usurper," the anapæst, from the third foot of a tragic senarius. The notes are very short, entirely critical—but so great a range of learning, combined with such felicity of emendation whenever a corrupt passage was encountered, is displayed in them, that there was never a moment's doubt as to the quarter whence the new edition had proceeded.

Gilbert Wakefield soon attacked the Hecuba in the artillery of a bitter pamphlet, in one passage of which he literally accused Porson of lying.

A few days before this pamphlet appeared, Porson had met Wakefield at Payne's shop, whence, conversing amicably on literary matters, they sauntered down to Egerton's, and parted good friends at Charing-cross. A few days afterwards, Porson left town for the country-house of a friend, where he was told that Wakefield was "coming out with something against him." He was surprised; but on receiving a copy of

the performance, observed that it was as unskilful as it was rash, and that it might be demolished in a column of a morning paper. "But," added he, "if he goes on thus, he will tempt me to examine his *Silva Critica*. I hope we shall not meet; for a violent quarrel would be the consequence."

"On the eve of the publication of the diatribe, Porson was present at a club, to which he belonged; when the president proposed that each of the members should toast a friend, accompanying his name with a suitable quotation from Shakspeare. When Porson's turn came, he said, "I'll give you my friend, Gilbert Wakefield, 'What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba?'"

Porson was, however, silent amidst Wakefield's abuse: he forbore to mention him from kindness, as he could have noticed him only with the severest censure. (Mr. Watson gives at length the details of Wakefield's attack, and the controversy which it produced.)

About this time, also, Godfrey Hermann, of Leipsic, then a very young man, attacked the new Hecuba with great presumption; and Porson considered himself so disrespectfully treated in Hermann's preface and notes, that he ever after regarded him as a personal enemy. He alluded to Wakefield and Hermann together, especially for their animadversions on his critical dogmata. He used to speak of them as four-footed animals, and say that whatever he wrote in future should be written in such a manner that they should not reach it with their paws, though they stood on their hind legs to get at it.

Hermann's criticisms drew from Porson the Supplement to his Preface, in which he amply vindicated all the metrical canons and opinions which he had before delivered, and vindicated them at the expense of Hermann; for though he is not named in the Supplement, yet almost every line of it contains an allusion to some blunder committed by the rash German, who repented him of his errors.

Bishop Blomfield, in his strictures on Valpy's reprint of Stephen's *Thesaurus*, in the *Quarterly Review*, observed that "Hermann and his school never miss an opportunity of lavishing their censure on Porson, and on those English scholars whom they facetiously enough term Porson's disciples; while, on the other hand, it is a sufficient title to their esteem to flatter the German critics at the expense of the English." This raised up Mr. E. H. Barker, one of the

Thesaurus editors, who had been panegyrised by Hermann: he resented Dr. Blomfield's censures in a pamphlet of great asperity, which was replied to in the *Quarterly Review*, in which it is observed: "as to the quarrel between Porson and Hermann, (whom Mr. Barker styles 'these modern Goliahs,') it is perfectly well known to have originated in the attempt made by the latter to decry the edition of the Hecuba at the first publication; an attempt which was as conspicuous for the bad feeling which dictated, as for the utter failure which attended it; but which must always be regarded by scholars with some satisfaction, as being the means of calling forth from Porson that fund of accurate and clear observation which distinguishes the second edition of the Hecuba, and has given us more insight into the poetry of the scenic writers of Greece than all the volumes which ever preceded it. Porson unquestionably resented what he considered a rude, presumptuous, and unproved attack from the German, whose errors and whose ignorance he exposes in the happiest and most complete manner, without condescending to name him; but in a note upon a verse of the Medea he inflicts a severe chastisement, by holding up to derision some of Hermann's blunders in caustic and taunting language; which, however it might have been deserved, we think he would better have consulted his own dignity by suppressing. Hermann, who was then a young man, and had aspired to notice in a controversy with an adversary whose strength he had miscalculated, was deeply chagrined by his failure; and we are sorry to say, appears never to have been able to lay aside his feelings towards Porson, which had their origin twenty-five years ago. In conclusion (the reviewer observes) while we repeat our high opinion of Professor Hermann's genius, learning, and industry, we must refuse the least credit to his judgment of contemporary scholars."

Mr. Luard considers "the Supplement to the Preface is probably owed to Hermann's attack upon him, as it forced Porson, in spite of his indolent habits, to come forward in his own defence; and probably of all the single pieces of minute criticism that have appeared on these subjects, the first place must be given to this. The extreme beauty of the style, the steps by which the reader is carried on from one point to another, and the richness of the illustration, make it one of the most amusing of diatribes. The metrical laws which he promulgates are laid down with such clearness, and

illustrated by such a number of apt examples, as to make what had been a puzzle to the best scholars of past times, easy to the merest tyro in Greek scholarship."

THE GRENVILLE HOMER.

While Porson was publishing his Euripides, the Grenville Homer was printed at the Clarendon Press. The editors being anxious to affix a collation of the well-known Harleian MS. of the Odyssey, applied to Porson; there resulted what may form a model to all future collators of manuscript. Dry, too, as such a work must be, he had managed to enliven it with choice specimens of criticism.

Porson was then living in Essex-court, in the Temple, where he would, on many occasions, shut himself up for two or three days together; but while he was employed on the Harleian manuscript, he was almost wholly inaccessible even to his most intimate friends. "One morning," says Mr. Maltby, "I went to call upon him there; and having inquired at the barber's close by if Mr. Porson was at home, was answered, 'Yes, but he has seen no one for two days.' I, however, proceeded to his chambers, and knocked at the door more than once. He would not open it, and I came downstairs. As I was re-crossing the court, Porson, who perceived that I was the visitor, opened the window, and stopped me."

His remuneration for the collation was fifty pounds, and a large paper copy. "I thought the payment too small," observes Maltby, "but Burney considered it as sufficient."

He concludes, after making some final corrections, with this paragraph:

"Thus I have, at last, I hope, left no important error in this collation; that there are no omissions, I will not assert. If any one, however, shall take upon himself to supply any deficiencies, and to correct, at the same time, such mistakes as I have committed, let him be assured that he will do what is acceptable to the republic of letters as well as to myself. Whether he do it tenderly or harshly, will have no effect on me, if he do it but accurately; but it may possibly have a good effect on himself, if he be anxious to show that he undertakes the task, rather from a desire to be of service to letters than to depress a rival."

PORSON'S CORRECTIONS.

In the list of Porson's labours, we find that in 1793, he added a few short notes to the London edition of Heyne's *Virgil*, for which he made an agreement with the bookseller to correct the press; but he complained that his corrections were disregarded; and in fact, several hundred errors of no great importance were suffered to disfigure it.

He corrected also the Greek text of Æschylus for the Glasgow editions, the folio of 1795, and the two volumes octavo, printed in 1794, but only published in London in 1806. The folio is said to have appeared surreptitiously. There are more than 200 original corrections, and a further number of passages pointed out as corrupt.

PORSON AT HATTON.

At one period, Porson spent a good deal of his time at Dr. Parr's parsonage at Hatton. He generally passed his mornings in the library, and for the most part in silence; but in the evenings, especially if Parr was away, he would collect the young men of the house about him, and pour forth from the rich stores of his memory torrents of every kind of literature—pages of Barrow, whole scenes of Foote, and favourite pieces from the periodical press. The charms of his society are described as being then irresistible. "Nothing could be more gratifying," says one of his friends, "than a *tête-à-tête* with him; his recitations from Shakspeare, and his ingenious etymologies and dissertations on the roots of the English language, were a high treat. It was quite extraordinary how he would trace a word from its origin to its common acceptance." And though towards the last few months of his life his memory was slightly impaired, this wonderful power of retaining accurately what he had read, and being able to produce it always when called for, never forsook him. A curious instance is related by Mr. P. L. Gordon (*Personal Memoirs*, vol. i.) of his giving to a company assembled in his house a translation from memory of an Italian novel he had sat up all night to read:—"Although there were above *forty* names introduced into the story, he had only forgotten *one*. This annoyed him so much that he started from the table, and after pacing about the room for ten minutes, he stopped short, exclaiming, 'Eureka! the Count's name is Don Fran-

cesco Averani.'" "Nothing," says Stephen Weston, "came amiss to his memory—he would set a child right in his two-penny fable-book, repeat the whole of the moral tale of the Dean of Badajos, or a page of Athenæus on cups, or Eustathius on Homer." An anecdote is told of his repeating the *Rape of the Lock*, making observations as he went on, and noting the various readings: of which one of the company said, "Had it been taken down from his mouth and published, it would have made the best edition of that poem yet in existence."—Barker's *Parriana*.

Mr. Rogers, Dyce's *Table Talk*, p. 218, mentions Porson's entertaining a large party at William Spencer's, by reciting an immense quantity of forgotten Vauxhall songs. But anecdotes of his wonderful memory abound.

IRELAND'S SHAKSPEARE FORGERIES.

With much greater caution than Dr. Parr exercised in pronouncing an opinion upon what he afterwards declared to be "a great and impudent forgery," Porson hesitated as to a declaration of his belief in the genuineness of these papers. The elder Ireland pressed him for his name, but he replied that he would rather be excused, as he was slow to subscribe to *articles of faith*. The younger Ireland, the forger, tells us that Porson, after inspecting the manuscripts, "appeared so perfectly well satisfied respecting them" that his father was emboldened to ask the Professor "whether he would be unwilling to write his name among the list of believers in their authenticity," when he made the curt and dry answer above quoted. But even young Ireland does not state that Porson uttered a single word relating to the papers; and considering the anxieties of father and son in this precious hoax, it required but little to make it *appear* to the son that Porson was satisfied, and left the father to induce him to ask the Professor for his attestation. There can be no doubt that Porson had made up his mind they were spurious; and he was fond of joking on those who, though forced to acknowledge that Shakspeare did not write the papers, yet wanted to prove that he might have written them.

Mr. Watson has given a complete account of the Ireland forgeries in his recently published work; and Sheridan's share in the matter is related in pp. 67, 68 of the present volume.

Porson, in a letter to a friend, written soon after 1804, writes: "Thank you for returning Mr. Ireland's, whom you justly call *an amiable youth*, and I think you might have added, *a modest*. Witness a publication of his, entitled *Rhapsodies, by W. H. Ireland, author of the Shakspearean MSS.*, &c. where he addresses his book:

As on thy title-page, poor little book,
Full oft I cast a sad and pensive look,
I shake my head, and pity thee;
For I, alas! no brazen front possess,
Nor do I every potent art profess,
To send thee forth from censure free.

—though I cannot help looking upon him as too modest in the fourth verse: he certainly underrates the amount and extent of his possessions. He is by no means *poor in his own brass.*" And Porson was right.

VALUE OF ACCENTS.

In Porson's notes to the Medea, printed at the Cambridge University Press, at the expense of the syndics, he troubles his adversaries with a little more attention than he had hitherto done. After alluding to the mistakes often made by editors, and the old grammarians, in regard to accents, he proceeds to say: "Here is a rather long note, and on a subject, even, some may think, of no great importance; and I might have diminished my labour, and perhaps consulted my quiet, by forbearing to offer these remarks, for I see that by some writers, very excellent men, no doubt, but not over learned, and somewhat ill-tempered, the whole doctrine of accents is regarded as utterly valueless. But such persons are too old, I conceive, to be untaught anything wrong, or to learn anything right, by my instructions. It is to you *young men*, however, whom alone I consider under my charge, that I now address myself. If any one of *you*, then, desires to gain an accurate knowledge of the Greek language, let him devote himself without delay to acquire a competent understanding of Greek accentuation, and persevere in the study, undeterred by the babble of railers, and the laughter of fools; for, *than foolish laughter nothing is more foolish.*"

These observations were chiefly directed against Wakefield, who had published his Greek plays, and a small edition of Bion and Moschus, without accents, and had, in his bold and wordy style, attempted to defend his practice.

PORSON AND HORNE TOOKE.

Porson would sit up drinking all night, without seeming to feel any bad effects from it. Horne Tooke once asked him to dine with him in Richmond-buildings; and as he knew that his guest had not been in bed for the three preceding nights, he expected to get rid of him at a tolerably early hour. He, however, kept Tooke up the whole night; and in the morning, the latter, in perfect despair, said, "Mr. Porson, I am engaged to meet a friend at breakfast at a coffee-house in Leicester-square."—"Oh," replied Porson, "I will go with you;" and he accordingly did so. Soon after they had reached the coffee-house, Tooke contrived to slip out, and, running home, ordered his servant not to let Mr. Porson in, even if he should attempt to batter down the door. "A man," observed Tooke, "who could sit up four nights successively, might have sat up forty."

Tooke used to say that "Porson would drink ink, rather than not drink at all." Indeed, he would drink anything. He was sitting with a gentleman, after dinner, in the chambers of a mutual friend, a Templar, who was then ill, and confined to bed. A servant came into the room, sent thither by his master, for a bottle of embrocation which was on the chimney-piece. "I drank it an hour ago," said Porson.

Stephens tells us of Porson's rudeness to Tooke, while dining with him one day at Wimbledon, and of Tooke's silencing and triumphing over him by making him dead-drunk with brandy; on which occasion some expressions of a disagreeable nature are said to have occurred at table. At that dinner, Tooke (as he told Mr. Maltby) asked Porson for a toast; and Porson replied, "I will give you—the man who is in all respects the very reverse of John Horne Tooke."—*Note to Porsoniana.*

THE ROSETTA STONE.

About the year 1803, Porson conferred a service on letters by bestowing considerable pains on the restoration of the Rosetta Stone, now in the Egyptian Saloon of the British Museum. This is, as the reader will perhaps recollect, a block of black marble, engraven with three inscriptions—in hieroglyphics, in the Coptic, or native language of Egypt, and in Greek, all of the same import, setting forth the services

which Ptolemy V. had done to his country, and decreeing, in the names of the priests assembled at Memphis, various honours to be paid to him.

This celebrated stone, to which we owe our first real knowledge of the system pursued by the ancient Egyptians in their monumental writing, had just been brought to England, and deposited in the British Museum; when Porson, fixing his attention on the Greek, the last twenty-six lines of which are considerably mutilated, restored it, in a great measure, by conjecture, and gave a translation of it. These results of his critical skill he presented, in January, to the Society of Antiquaries, who printed them, but not till several years after Porson's death, in the *Archæologia*, vol. xvi. They also appear among his Tracts, xxxvii.; and in the memoir of Porson, in the latest edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, occurs this note:—

In Dr. Clarke's *Greek Marbles* (Cambridge, 1809, 8vo.) we find a translation of this inscription, communicated to the editor by Porson, and printed from "a *corrected copy* in his own beautiful handwriting." But we may venture to apply Porson's favourite remark on the facility of transposition, and to read, "a *copy corrected* in his own writing," that is, on the margin of Mr. Gough's translation, as published in Duane's *Coins;* for the whole is very negligently performed; and it is not a little remarkable that this translation, which was at least approved by Porson, is decidedly less accurate than the Latin translation of Heyne, as appears from the investigation of the enchorial inscription published in the sixth number of the *Museum Criticum*.

Porson, of course, made several visits to the British Museum, to read and consider the stone, whence he got from the officials the *sobriquet* of "Judge Blackstone."

PORSON'S NOSE.

The Professor is very droll at his own expense in his reply to the invitation of his friend Mr. Joy, a surgeon: he should be happy to obey the summons, and should equally approve of the commons, the company, and the conversation; "but," he adds, "for some time past, my face, or rather *my nose*, whether from good living or bad humours, has been growing into a great resemblance of honest Bardolph's, or, to keep still on the list of honest fellows, of honest Richard Brinsley's.

I have, therefore, put myself under a regimen of abstinence till my poor nose recovers its *quondam* colour and compass; after which I shall be happy to attend your parties on the shortest notice."

He would often relate, with much good-humour, that he went to call on one of the judges, with whom he was intimate, when a gentleman, who did not know Porson, was waiting impatiently for the barber. The Professor, who was negligently dressed, and had, besides, a patch of brown paper soaked in vinegar on his inflamed nose, being shown into the room where the gentleman was sitting, he started up suddenly, and, rushing towards Porson, exclaimed, "Are you the barber?" "No, sir," replied Porson; "but I am a cunning shaver, very much at your service."

One of the advantages of telling stories of this kind of one's-self is, that it takes the opportunity out of the hands of another, who might not give so agreeable a picture of the peculiarity.

This *redness of his nose* proceeded greatly from his indulgence in port wine, which he preferred to every other wine, as well at dinner as after it. Of liquors, his favourite was brandy, the drink of heroes; and we all know that brandy does not pale the fire of the nose. Mrs. Parr said, that more brandy was drunk during three weeks that Porson spent at Hatton, than during all the time that she had kept house before. Late in life, he was generally seen with black patches on his nose.

LORD BYRON AND PORSON.

His Lordship remembered Porson at Cambridge; that in the hall, where he himself dined, at the Vice-Master's table, and Porson at the Dean's, he always appeared sober in his demeanour; nor was he guilty, as far as his Lordship knew, of any excess or outrage in public; but that in an evening, with a party of undergraduates, he would, in fits of intoxication, get into violent disputes with the young men, and revile them for not knowing what he thought they might be expected to know. He once went away in disgust, because none of them knew the name of "the Cobbler of Messina." In this condition, Byron had seen him at William Baukes's, the Nubian discoverer's, rooms, where he would pour forth whole pages of various languages, and distinguish himself especially by his copious floods of Greek.

By the way, Bankes once invited Porson to dine with him, at an hotel at the west end of London; but the dinner passed away without the guest making his appearance. Afterwards, on Bankes's asking him why he had not kept his engagement, Porson replied (without entering into further particulars), that he "*had* come;" and Pankes could only conjecture that the waiters, seeing Porson's shabby dress, and not knowing who he was, had offered him some insult, which had made him indignantly return home.

Lord Byron further tells us, that he had seen Sheridan "drunk, with all the world; his intoxication was that of Bacchus, and Porson's that of Silenus. Of all the disgusting brutes, sulky, abusive, and intolerable, Porson was the most bestial, so far as the few times that I saw him went, which were only at William Bankes's rooms. He was tolerated in this state among the young men for his talents, as the Turks think a madman inspired, and bear with him. He used to recite, or rather vomit, pages of all languages, and could hiccup Greek like a Helot; and certainly Sparta never shocked her children with a grosser exhibition than this man's intoxication."

PORSON AT THE LONDON INSTITUTION.

In the year 1805, was established by a proprietary, in the City, the London Institution, "for the advancement of literature and the *diffusion of useful knowledge*." * The Institution was temporarily located at No. 8, Old Jewry, in the fine brick mansion of Sir Robert Clayton, Lord Mayor in the time of Charles II. Upon the first committee of the Institution were Mr. R. Angerstein, and Mr. Richard Sharp. Porson was thought an eligible man to be its principal librarian.† He was accordingly appointed to the office by a unanimous resolution of the Governors, and Mr. Sharp had the gratification of announcing to the Professor his appoint-

* This being just twenty years before the "Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge" announced the publication of Nicholson's *Operative Mechanic*.

† The under librarian was Mr Savage, the author of an ingenious work on Decorative Printing, and a Dictionary of Printing. The present librarian, esteemed for his courtesy and attention to the members and visitors, is Mr. Richard Thompson, author of the *Chronicles of London Bridge*, and other works of merit.

ment. His friends rejoiced: Professor Young, of Glasgow, writing to Burney about this time, says, "Of Devil Dick you say nothing. I see by the newspapers they have given him a post; a handsome salary, I hope; a suite of chambers, coal and candle, &c. Porter and cider, I trust, are among the et cæteras." His salary was 200*l.* a year, with a suite of rooms. Still, Porson was not just the man for a librarian; for no one could use books more roughly: he had no affectation about books, nor, indeed, affectation of any sort. The late Mr. William Upcott, (who *found* the MSS. of Evelyn's *Diary* at Wotton,) was fellow-secretary with Porson. The Institution removed to King's Arms-yard, Coleman-street, in 1812; and thence, in 1819, to the present handsome mansion, erected from the classic design of Mr. W. Brooks, architect, on the north side of Moorfields, now Finsbury-circus.

The library is "one of the most useful and accessible in Britain;" and Mr. Watson found in a few of the books, Porson's handwriting, consisting of critical remarks and notes. In a copy of the Aldine Herodotus, he has marked the chapters in the margin in Arabic numerals, "with such nicety and regularity," says his biographer, "that the eye of the reader, unless upon the closest examination, takes them for print."

But the reader will please to return with us to the Old Jewry. Here, in the fine old civic palace, Porson was well housed. But his health was bad: his asthma had so increased, and his habits had originated other diseases. Dr. Thomas Young tells us that Porson used to attend in his place when the reading-room was open, and that he freely gave literary information to the members, and to all comers. But he did not prove an efficient librarian: he grew irregular in his attendance, made no purchases of books to augment the collection, which his bibliographical knowledge, it was expected, would insure his doing; and he was often brought home in a state of helpless insensibility, long after midnight. In short, the Directors of the Institution had made up their minds to dismiss him: and in a letter of complaint to him was this cutting remark: "We only know you are our librarian by seeing your name attached to the receipts for your salary;" and he in return used to call the Directors "mercantile and mean beyond merchandise and meanness."

He held this appointment two years; making occasional visits to Cambridge and Eton; and when he last went to

Norfolk, in 1806, he is said to have carried with him, for reading, a manuscript of some portion of Plato, which he had borrowed of Dr. E. D. Clarke.

LAST ILLNESS.

Early in the year 1806, Porson's memory—his stupendous memory—began to fail; which was the first indication of his breaking up. Later in the year, he had symptoms of intermittent fever; and in the autumn he complained of being out of order, and feeling as if he had the ague.

On the morning of the 19th of September, he left the Old Jewry to call on his brother-in-law, Mr. Perry, in the Strand, and reached his house about half-past one. Perry was from home, and Porson proceeded along the Strand towards Charing-cross, and had reached the corner of Northumberland-street, when he was seized with a fit of apoplexy, which deprived him of speech, and rendered him motionless. A crowd gathered round him, and as he remained senseless, and nothing was found upon him to indicate where he resided, he was conveyed to St. Martin's workhouse, St. Martin's-lane, where medical aid was immediately given, and he was partially restored to consciousness. How afflicting it is to think of this wreck of a man of rare genius struck down in the public street through his own depraved appetite—and the person whom the sons of learning had honoured as one of the foremost classical scholars of the age, lying unknown and unclaimed, and carried to the common receptacle of misfortune and errant mortality! He still remained unable to speak; the authorities sent to the *British Press* newspaper an advertisement, which appeared next morning, describing him as "a tall man, apparently about five and forty years of age, dressed in a blue coat and black breeches, and having in his pocket a gold watch, a trifling quantity of silver, and a memorandum-book, the leaves of which were chiefly filled with Greek lines written in pencil, and partly effaced; two or three lines of Latin, and an algebraical calculation; the Greek extracts being principally from eminent medical works."

This advertisement met the eye of Mr. Savage, the under-librarian at the London Institution, who, knowing that Porson had not slept at home on the preceding night, made up his mind that the Professor was the person described in the newspaper. He therefore hastened to St. Martin's work-

house, and there found Porson a little recovered, and feebly walking about the room. Mr. Savage then proposed to call a hackney-coach, but Porson would not allow him to leave for this purpose, saying that he would rather walk, and take one in the street. They then walked through the King's Mews, to Charing-cross, and there got into a coach, and were driven from thence to the Old Jewry. As they proceeded Porson spoke of his attack in the street, was thankful for having fallen into the hands of honest people, who had left him his gold watch, &c. He also expressed his sympathy for the loss of life and property in the fire which, a few hours before, had destroyed Covent-garden Theatre, of which he had heard in the morning, and Mr. Savage now further described to him. He conversed in his usual pleasant manner, and his mental faculties seemed scarcely to have suffered; and a remark, as they passed St. Paul's Cathedral, upon the ill treatment of Sir Christopher Wren, showed that Porson's memory was not gone.

When they reached the house of the Institution, in the Old Jewry, Porson showed great bodily debility in getting out of the coach; but he was able to walk to his room, where he took some breakfast, of green tea (which he always preferred,) and toast. He then went down into the library, where he met Dr. Adam Clarke, who has left an interesting account of their interview.

"I went up to him," says Dr. Clarke, "shook hands with him, and seeing him look extremely ill, and not knowing what had happened, I expressed my surprise and regret. He then drew near to the window, and began, in a low, tremulous, interrupted voice, to account for his present appearance; but his speech was so much affected, that I found it difficult to understand what he said. He proceeded, however, to give me, as well as he could, an account of his late seizure, and two or three times, with particular emphasis, said, 'I have just escaped death.'

"When he had finished his account of the fit into which he had lately fallen, and on which he seemed unwilling to dwell, he suddenly turned the conversation by saying, 'Dr. Clarke, you once promised, but probably you have forgotten, to let me see the stone with the Greek inscription, which was brought from Eleusis.' I replied, 'I have not, sir, forgotten my promise, but I am now getting a *facsimile* of the stone and inscription engraved, and hope soon to have the pleasure of

presenting you with an accurate copy.' To which he answered, 'I thank you, but I should rather see the stone itself.'" (To this Dr. Clarke assented, and arranged to bring the stone, according to Porson's appointment, on Thursday morning.) "Though," says Dr. Clarke, "from his present appearance I had small hopes of being gratified with that luminous criticism with which, I well knew, he would illustrate and dignify even this small relic of Grecian antiquity."

Dr. Clarke then minutely describes the conversation he had with Porson respecting a mosaic pavement, just found at Palestrini, now Preneste, in Italy; but his speech now became greatly affected, so that it was a long time before he could complete a sentence, not only because of the paralytic affection of all the organs of speech, but also through extreme debility, and the dryness of the tongue and fauces, his lips being parched, so as to resemble a cinder.

Dr. Clarke then changed the conversation, and adverted to what he considered a new form of the omega in the inscription on his Eleusinian stone, which led him to remark how the system-makers, especially in literature, are perpetually perplexing and retarding science, and embarrassing one another. To this Porson assented, and quoted two lines in the Greek anthology. "As soon as he had repeated these lines," says Dr. Clarke, "which he did, considering his circumstances, with a readiness that surprised me, he proceeded, as was his general custom when he quoted any author in the learned languages, to give a translation of what he had quoted. This was a peculiar delicacy in his character. He could not bear to see a man confounded, unless he knew him to be a pedant; and, therefore, though he might presume that the person to whom he spoke understood the language, yet, because it might possibly be otherwise, and the man feel embarrassed on the occasion, he always paid him the compliment of being acquainted with the subject, and saved him, if ignorant, from confusion, by translating it. This, however, in the above case, cost him extreme pain, as he was *some minutes* in expressing its meaning, which astonished me the more, because, notwithstanding his debility, and the paralysis under which the organs of speech laboured, he had so shortly before quoted the original in *a few seconds*, and with comparatively little hesitation. The truth is, so imbued was his mind with Grecian literature, that he *thought*, as well as spoke, in that language, and found it much more easy at this time, from the

power of habit and association, to pronounce Greek than to pronounce his mother-tongue."

Seeing him so very ill and weak, Dr. Clarke thought it best to withdraw, and having shook hands with him, (which, alas! was the last time he ever was to have that satisfaction,) and with a pained heart earnestly wished him a speedy restoration to health, the Doctor walked out of the room, promising to visit him, if possible, on Thursday morning, with the Greek inscription. Porson accompanied his visitor to the head of the great staircase, and leaning over the balustrade, he continued speaking till his visitor was more than half way downstairs. "When nearly at the bottom," says Dr. Clarke, "I looked up, and saw him still leaning over the balustrade. I stopped a moment, as if to take a last view of a man to whose erudition and astonishing critical acumen my mind had ever bowed down with becoming reverence, and then said, 'Sir, I am truly sorry to see you so low.' To which he answered, 'I have had a narrow escape from death.' And then, leaving the stair-head, he turned towards the library. This was the *last conversation* he was ever capable of holding on any subject."

On Dr. Clarke taking leave of him, the Professor, soon afterwards, prepared to go out, when Mrs. Savage asked whether he would not dine at home; with this he seemingly acquiesced; but he is thought to have fancied himself under restraint, and to convince himself of the contrary, walked out, and soon after, went into the African, or Cole's Coffee-house, in St. Michael's-alley, Cornhill. On entering the coffee-room, he was so exhausted that he must have fallen, had he not caught hold of the brass rod of one of the boxes, when he was noticed by Mr. J. P. Leigh, a gentleman with whom he had frequently dined at the same place. A chair was given him; he sat down and stared around, with a vacant and ghastly countenance, and he evidently did not recollect Mr. Leigh. He took a little wine, which revived him, for previously to this, his head lay upon his breast, and he was continually muttering something, but in so low and indistinct a tone as not to be audible. He then took a little jelly dissolved in warm brandy-and-water, which considerably roused him. Still, he could make no answer to questions addressed to him, except these words, which he repeated, probably, twenty times: "The gentleman said it was a lucrative piece of business, and *I* think so too"—but in a very low tone. A coach was now brought to take him to the Institution, and he was

helped in, and accompanied by the waiter: he appeared quite senseless all the way, and did not utter a word; and in reply to the question where they should stop, he put his head out of the window, and waved with his hand when they came opposite the door of the Institution. Upon this Dr. Clarke touchingly observes: "How quick the transition from the highest degree of intellect to the lowest apprehensions of sense! On what a precarious tenure does frail humanity hold even its choicest and most necessary gifts."

In the *Gentleman's Magazine* appears another account of Porson being brought home ill on the Tuesday morning to the Institution, where he remarked that "the keeper of the workhouse was a wag, and had endeavoured to pose him with his wit." He was incoherent, both in manner and matter, and he was recommended to prepare his will. To this he consented, and entered in a general conversation on the moral obligation of disposing of our property after death, adding that the subject had been treated in a legal way, but scarcely ever in the manner he wished, except in a work entitled *Symbolography;* he afterwards left the room, and brought one of the catalogues in which the work was described. He remained in conversation in this way for five hours, sometimes in the full exercise of his powers, at others wild and wandering. Mr. Watson doubts this conversation taking place as stated above, Porson being then too weak.

He was attended by Mr. Norris, a surgeon, one of his intimate friends. He was put to bed on Tuesday, and his brother-in-law, Mr. Perry, was sent for; he soon arrived, and continued to the last to pay him the kindest attention, with the most affectionate solicitude. Dr. Babington and Mr. Upton were now sent for. He continued, with a few short and slight intervals of amendment, to grow weaker; he had gradually lost the power of speech and sight, so that, sometime before his death, his eyes were insensible to the light of a candle. Dr. Clarke saw him on the Friday; he stared at him wildly and vacantly—at last recognised him—but he could not speak, though he appeared comparatively sensible.

Porson expired on the night of Sunday, September 25, 1808, with a deep groan, exactly as the clock struck twelve—in the 49th year of his age. His body was opened: during the indisposition which he called ague and fever, a low inflammatory action was going on within the head, the result of which

was effusion of lymph in and upon the brain, which was the immediate cause of his death.

Dr. Babington, who was present at the *post mortem* examination, observes that the healthy state of the viscera "may be attributed to Porson's *general abstinence from ardent spirits*, which I am assured by some of his intimate friends, he very rarely drank, and scarcely ever to excess." This does not accord with the general notion of Porson's habits: indeed, it is abundantly contradicted by evidence; though he may have been more abstinent from spirits late in life. His skull was much like those of most other men.

THE FUNERAL.

On Monday, October 3, the remains of Porson were removed from the London Institution; the hearse being followed by four mourning-coaches, and six private carriages, with Porson's relatives and friends. The procession reached the gate of Trinity College, Cambridge, on Tuesday afternoon. The coffin was deposited in the hall, where, according to ancient usage, the body lay in state from half-past two to five o'clock. "At that hour," says Mr. Watson, "Dr. Mansel, the Master of the College, who was then Bishop of Bristol; the Vice-Master, the senior and junior Fellows, and many others desirous to show honour to the deceased, advanced into the hall, and walked in procession round the coffin, the pall being borne by the eight senior Fellows, among whom were two of his own standing, Hailstone and Raine, and his old examiner Lambert." To the pall were affixed various copies of Greek and English verse, celebrating the merits of the deceased, as was then the custom at funerals in the University.*

The service at the grave was read by the Bishop of Bristol. His tomb is at the foot of Sir Isaac Newton's statue, at the opposite end of the chapel in which rest the remains of Bentley. Porson's grave is covered with a plain slab, simply inscribed with his name. Nor is there any epithet whatever in the Latin inscription on the coffin. But there is, in the library of the College, a marble portrait-bust of Porson, by Chantrey.

* Mr. Luard believes the last occasion on which this practice was observed, was at the funeral of Dr. E. D. Clarke, in Jesus College, in 1822.

PERSONAL APPEARANCES.

Porson was generally ill-dressed and dirty; but one day he was seen at Sotheby's auction-room, just after he had been rolling in the kennel; he had just come from a party with whom he had been sitting up drinking for two nights.

There is a monument, with a bust of Porson, in the chapel. There are two portraits of him: one painted by his friend Hoppner, is in the Public Library at Cambridge: the other, by Kirkby, is in the dining-room of the Master's lodge at Trinity College.

Mr. Luard describes him, in personal appearance, tall; his head very fine, with an expansive forehead, over which he plastered his brown hair; he had a long Roman nose, and his eyes were remarkably keen and penetrating. In general, he was very careless as to his dress, especially when alone in his chamber, or when reading hard; but "when in his gala costume, a smart blue coat, white vest, black satin nether garments and silk stockings, with a shirt ruffled at the wrists, he looked quite the gentleman."

Of the power of his eye Mr. Luard prints, for the first time, this illustration. Once, when Porson was in the combination-room at Jesus College, with Dr. Clarke, Caldwell, &c., there was a dead pause in the conversation; at that moment Kirby the painter called out, "Come, Mr. Professor, say a good thing." Porson, making no reply, fixed his eagle eye on him, and continued to look at him steadfastly, till Kirby at length found no means of escaping the penetrating glance but by skulking out of the room.

HIS PROPERTY.

Porson is said to have surprised his friends by having money in the funds, approaching 900*l*. The money subscribed for his annuity, and which the contributors, or their heirs, declined to receive back, was ultimately devoted to founding the Porson Prize and the Porson Scholarship: there being first paid out of the fund the funeral expenses; the cost of Chantrey's bust; and of Sharpe's engraving the portrait by Hoppner; an impression of the plate being sent to each of the subscribers to the fund, or their executors.

His library (Mr. Luard tells us,) was divided into two portions, one of which was sold by auction soon after his death;

and the other, consisting of the greater number of his books which contained MS. notes, including the transcript of the Photius and a quantity of MS. papers, was bought by Trinity College, at the price of one thousand guineas, in the library of which Society it remains. The notes are, for the most part, written in copy-books, in an exceedingly minute hand —some sixty separate notes on different authors in the whole range of Greek literature being written on a small quarto page. Many are on scraps and odds and ends of waste-paper. There is a collection, of considerable extent, of letters to Porson from continental scholars of the time; and one letter from Hermann.

His books, when sold by auction, did not fetch very large prices, except the Grenville Homer, which brought 83 guineas. The whole produced nearly 1,000 guineas; the books and papers purchased by the College, exactly that sum; and the copyright of Plays, money in the funds, &c., amounted to 3,356*l.* This sum, as Porson died intestate, was equally divided between his sister, three nephews, and a niece; all of whom have died, so that the name is extinct. His works occupy ten thick 8vo. volumes; and very few scholars have done, even in quantity, anything like so much as Porson did.

HIS HEALTH.

Porson's health through life was never very good, and whenever he felt unwell, his usual remedy was total abstinence from food: for physic and physicians he had a great contempt, and yet, curiously enough, many of his most intimate friends were physicians. In a letter written in 1802 to Dr. Davy, he says, "I have been at death's door myself; but by a due neglect of the faculty, and plentiful use of my old remedy, (powder of post,) I am pretty well recovered."

CHARACTERISTICS, RETROSPECTIVE OPINIONS, AND PERSONAL TRAITS.

PORSON AND HIS FRIENDS.

Porson had no very high opinion of Parr, who was evidently afraid of Porson's intellectual powers. One evening, Parr was beginning a regular harangue on the origin of evil, when Porson stopped him short by saying, "what's the use of it?"

Porson, who shrunk on all occasions from praise of himself, was only annoyed by the eulogies which Parr lavished upon him in print—such as "a giant in literature," &c. "How," said Porson, "should Dr. Parr be able to take the measure of a giant?"

Yet Porson had great respect for true scholars. Out of this feeling for the memory of Jeremiah Markland, Porson once went purposely to see Milton Court, near Dorking, where Markland spent his later years, and where he died.

One day, Porson went down to Greenwich to borrow a book from Dr. Burney, who, not being at home Porson stepped into his library, pocketed the volume, and set off again for London. Soon after, Burney came home; and, offended at the liberty Porson had taken, pursued him in a chaise, and recovered the book. Porson told Rogers of this affair with some bitterness: "Did Burney suppose," he said, "that I meant to play *his* old tricks?" (alluding to a well-known circumstance in the earlier part of Burney's history.) —*Porsoniana.*

Soon after the *Letters to Travis* were published, Gibbon wrote a note to Porson, requesting the pleasure of his acquaintance. Porson, accordingly, called upon the great historian, who received him with all kindness and respect. In the course of conversation, Gibbon said, "Mr. Porson, I feel truly indebted to you for the *Letters to Travis*, though I must think that occasionally, while praising me, you have mingled a little acid with the sweet. If ever you should

take the trouble to read my History over again, I should be much obliged and honoured by any remarks on it which might suggest themselves to you." Porson was highly flattered by Gibbon's having requested this interview, and loved to talk of it. He thought the *Decline and Fall* beyond all comparison the greatest literary production of the eighteenth century, and was in the habit of repeating long passages from it. Yet Mr. Rogers had often heard him say, that "there could not be a better exercise for a schoolboy than to turn a page of it into English."

"I hear," said Rogers to Porson, "that you are to dine to-day at Holland House." "Who told you so?" asked he. Rogers replied, "Mackintosh." "But I certainly shall not go," continued Porson; "they invite me merely out of curiosity; and after they had satisfied it, they would like to kick me down stairs." He was then told that Fox was coming from St. Anne's-hill to Holland House for the express purpose of being introduced to him; but Porson persisted in his resolution, and would not go.

Rogers, who was intimate with Porson for the last twenty years of his life, tells us that, in spite of all his faults, it was impossible not to admire his integrity and his love of truth.

When Mr. Rogers introduced the dissenting minister, Eliezer Cogan, to Porson, saying, "This is Mr. Cogan, who is passionately fond of what you have devoted yourself to,—Greek;" Porson replied, "If Mr. Cogan is passionately fond of Greek, he must be content to dine off bread and cheese for the remainder of his life."

It is pleasant to read of Porson's admiration for Bentley. "When I was seventeen," he once said, "I thought I knew everything; as soon as I was twenty-four, and had read Bentley, I found I knew nothing." He once, says Mr. Kidd, in conversing with a North Briton, portrayed the prominent features of Bentley's literary character with a justness and familiarity which so warmed the plain, honest hyperborean, that, before they parted, he ventured to inquire if Dr. Bentley were not a Scotchman. Mr. Kidd should have finished the story. "No, sir," said Porson, "he was a scholar."—*Luard.*

Dr. Maltby, Bishop of Durham, once invited Porson to meet Archdeacon Paley at dinner. Paley arrived first. When Porson (who had never before seen him) came into

the room, he seated himself in an arm-chair, and looking very hard at Paley, said, "I am entitled to this chair, being president of a society for the discussion of truth, of which I happen at present to be the only member." These words were levelled at certain political opinions broached in Paley's works.

Dr. Turton said: "If in a general council of scholars an individual were to be selected and sent forth to take a survey of any region of antiquity, profane or ecclesiastical, it is quite certain that the person who should be found to possess Mr. Porson's endowments would command every vote."

IDEAS OF DEATH.

Porson was often heard by his friends to declare that he had not the slightest dread of death—adding that he despised *fabulæ aniles*, and quoting Epicharnus from Cicero, &c. He was once holding forth in this strain, when Dr. Babington said to him, "Let me tell you, Porson, that I have known several persons who, though, when in perfect health, they talked as you do now, were yet dreadfully alarmed when death was really near them."

RECOLLECTIONS, BY SAMUEL ROGERS.

When any one told Porson that he intended to *publish* a book, Porson would say, "Remember that two parties must agree on that point,—you and the reader."

I asked him what time it would take him to translate *The Iliad* literally into English prose. He answered, "At least, ten years."

"If I had a carriage," said Porson, "and if I saw a well-dressed person on the road, I would always invite him in, and learn of him what I could." Such was his love of knowledge.

Louis XIV. was the son of Anne of Austria by Cardinal Richelieu. The man in the Iron Mask was Anne's eldest son. I have no doubt of it.

When Prometheus made man, he had used up all the water in making other animals; so he mingled his clay with tears.

When repeating a generous action from antiquity, or describing a death like Phocion's, his eyes would fill and his voice falter.

All wit is true reasoning.

If I had 3,000*l.* per annum, I would have a person constantly dressed, night and day, with fire and candle, to attend upon me. (He was an uncertain sleeper.)

I had lived long before I discovered that Wit was Truth.

I must confess I have a very strong prejudice against all German original literature.

In drawing a villain, we should always furnish him with something that may seem to justify himself to himself.

Virgil has everywhere arranged his words naturally and properly, as in prose. No violent transpositions or inversions, —every word is precisely where it ought to be.

Wit is in general the finest sense in the world.

Authority should serve to excite attention, and no farther.

CHAMBERS IN THE TEMPLE.

We have already mentioned Porson's residence in Essex-court, Middle Temple. He described this portion of his life in his letter to the Rev. T. S. Hughes. It appears that he read immoderately hard while here. He used to talk of a curious interview he had with a girl of loose character, who came into his chambers by mistake, and who showed so much cleverness and ability in a long conversation with Porson, that he declared she might, with proper cultivation, have become another Aspasia. He also recited to Mr. Hughes, word for word, a speech with which he accosted Dr. Postlethwaite, when he called at his chambers, and which he had long prepared against such an occurrence. At the end of this oration, the Doctor said not a word, but burst into tears, and left the room. Porson also burst into tears when he finished the recital of it to Hughes.

Gurney (the Baron,) had chambers in Essex-court, under Porson's. One night, (or rather morning,) Gurney was awakened by a tremendous thump in the chambers above. Porson had just come home dead-drunk, and had fallen on the floor. Having extinguished his candle in the fall, he presently staggered down stairs to re-light it; and Gurney heard him keep dodging and poking with the candle at the staircase lamp for above five minutes, and all the while very lustily cursing the nature of things.

A writer in the *Athenæum*, however, maintains the following

to be a better version of the preceding story than its narrator, Maltby, has given :—

"Porson was not so indiscriminate a maledictor: he was trying to handle the candlestick, and as the useful article had two images, one purely subjective, and due to the action of wine, he persisted in fingering the wrong image, which had no objective reality for metaphysicians to theorize upon. When, after repeated trials, he began to apprehend the fact and the reason, he delivered himself as follows: 'D—— the nature of things.'".

HIS RELIGIOUS OPINIONS.

It is difficult to say what were Porson's theological opinions. On religious points, save in a critical point of view, he was always very unwilling to speak. Many of his friends and connexions inclined to Socinian doctrines; and his refusal to subscribe, together with the decided bias which appears to exist towards this quarter in the *Letters to Travis*, incline us to think that his own real opinions led thither. "Yet," says Mr. Luard, "this was really not the case. And to class him as an unbeliever would be shamefully untrue." Mr. Kidd speaks of the horror with which he received the charge of being a suspected unbeliever, and has brought together several passages from his works, which would not have been written by such a lover of truth as Porson was, had he really been an infidel. Outwardly, too, he observed the usual forms of religion; in his later years, when, with his relations in Norfolk, he was regular in his attendance at church, and once, certainly, received the Sacrament. Again, with reference to the interpolated passage of St. Augustine, quoted in the Twenty-ninth Article, he speaks of it as any member of the Church of England naturally would. Nor was he ever heard to say a word against the Established Church, or against those who differed from himself. During his father's last illness, when he visited Coltishall, the Christian tone of feeling and sentiment was everything that could have been desired. And Mr. Kidd mentions his speaking of his birthday (Christmas-day) with triumph and thankfulness. The only conceivable ground for any suspicion of his being an unbeliever rests on certain papers in one of the newspapers.

In Dr. Aikin's *Athenæum* we are told that Porson "was truly

and actively pious; but it was an order that admitted not of shackles;" but even this modified tribute to Porson's sincerity is believed to have been written by Perry.

EPIGRAMS.

The following epigram is well known, but not so are the circumstances which gave rise to it. Porson was kind to children. In a family where he visited there was a little girl of whom he was exceedingly fond; he often brought her trifling presents, wrote in her books, and distinguished her on every occasion. One day this little girl, going into the kitchen to deliver a message to a servant, took Porson by the hand, and led him in with her. A young woman, whose name was Susan, and who was a favourite of the family, was ironing linen. The child asked Porson to make some verses upon her; and on his return to the sitting-room, he said,

> When lovely Susan irons smocks,
> No damsel e'er looked neater,
> Her eyes are brighter than the box,
> And burn one like a heater.

Here is another of his epigrams—on his academic visits to the Continent:

> I went to Frankfort and got drunk
> With that most learn'd Professor Brunck:
> I went to Worts, and got more drunken
> With that more learn'd Professor Runcken.

PORSON'S IRONY.

The quiet vein of irony that runs through all Porson's writings, has sometimes misled his readers.

As a slight instance of this, in one of his revises he says, speaking of a line in the *Equites*, "Whoever has a mind to see what the critics have said about and about it," referring to the line in the *Dunciad* in Bentley's speech, "and write about it, goddess, and about it." When this article was reprinted in the *Museum Criticum*, the words, "and about it" were struck out as a misprint.

In the *Letters to Travis* he says:—"Having been always extremely fond of Gregory," and "My favourite Gregory," the allusion to "Hæc ex Gregorio illo Nazianzeno" is obvious, Mr. Kidd says, to every resident member of *our* university.

Most likely also, where he is also speaking of Gregory Nazianzen, the words, "the singular fitness of the passage for his purpose," contain an allusion to the same story.

Although this story is tolerably well known, it will bear repetition. Bishop Watson one day before presiding at an act, as Regius Professor of Divinity, in the schools, was overtaken by a friend out riding, who mentioned that there was a passage in Gregory Nazianzen of singular fitness for the morrow's disputation. "Is there?" said Watson, "I never read a word of him." "Never mind," the other replied, "I will send you my copy, with the leaf turned down at the passage." The next day the Professor came out glibly with the extract, ending it with "Hæc ex Gregorio illo Nazianzeno, quem semper in deliciis habui."

From this, a Mr. H. A. Mathew in the *Classical Journal*, vol. viii. in a paper recommending the study of the Fathers, uses as one of his arguments that "the immortal Porson declares (quoting the above passages) that Gregory was his favourite." It is somewhat remarkable that even Dr. Turton should have been misled by this—*Vindication*—as he was very familiar with Porson's ironical style, and mentions that "An amusing essay might be written on the mistakes which have arisen from interpreting in sober seriousness expressions which Porson meant to be understood as solemn irony."

The following odd story is related in a letter from the Rev. Mr. Hughes addressed to Mr. Upcott:

In last autumn, word was brought to the parson of a certain parish, that such a boy was just then killed with thunder and lightning. "Is he?" says the parson. "It is what I always foretold, that that boy would come to a dismal end, for he went constantly to a fanatical conventicle, and neither I nor his schoolmaster could dissuade him from it." "Ay, but, sir," replied the messenger, who brought the doctor these glad tidings, "Gaffer Pitchfork is murdered too with some thick toady clap of thunder, and do you know, sir, he was a main man for the church, and fought bravely for putting up the Maypole." At this the Doctor scratched his head, and said, "It is appointed unto all men once to die."

HABIT OF DRINKING.

Innumerable are the stories of Porson's intemperance. He was extremely convivial; and it is important to add that *he*

never drank alone. Mr. Luard, to whose able Cambridge Essay we have so often referred; and the Rev. Mr. Watson, from whose recently published Life of the Professor we have occasionally quoted, have not overstated Porson's love of drink; but have rather sought, and we think successfully, to purge his memory of this serious charge. He lived in times much more lax in manners than the present; and when we read of the fondness of Porson and Sheridan for strong potations, allowance should be made for the great changes in manners, and the greater attention paid to social propriety in these days than sixty or seventy years since, when the *noses* of Porson and Sheridan were the outward and visible signs of their inward yearnings.

The former has found an able apologist in the *Saturday Review*, who says of his *thirst*, "rather than the uglier word *drunkenness*, although Porson unhappily was a drunkard, yet his excesses, even in an age of hard drinking, were so marked and abnormal, that we are driven to the supposition of some unexplored disease being at the root of them. Dr. Parr and Horne Tooke were not addicted to thin potations. The Regent was an excellent toss-pot. Sheridan bore his blushing honours upon his face. John Kemble drank claret from sunset to sunrise. "Seldom," says Sydney Smith, "did gentlemen in the last century come sober into the drawing-room." A three-bottle man, at this moment, is almost a prodigy. In Porson's days he often sat in Parliament, and not unfrequently mounted the pulpit. Porson, however, was scarcely more ahead of his contemporaries in Greek than he was in drinking. He had an almost superhuman power of doing without sleep. To be requested to take his hat and go to his lodgings at two in the morning was resented by him as inhospitable treatment. He could drink anything—ink it was said—spirits of wine for the lamp, it was proved. He once drank an embrocation. But, had a portentous memory, and a stomach, so far as regards its capacity for alcohol, as portentous, been Porson's sole peculiarities, Mr. Watson would have wasted his ink in writing his life, and we our time in reviewing it. This prodigious—and to him fatal—faculty was neither the only nor the most valuable endowment of the still famous scholar and Professor.

One of the above instances, however, was worth telling more at length; and this Mr. Watson has done, as follows:

"When Hoppner the painter was residing in a cottage a few miles from London, Porson, one afternoon, unexpectedly arrived there. Hoppner said that he could not offer him dinner, as Mrs. Hoppner had gone to town, and had carried with her the key of the closet which contained the wine. Porson, however, declared that he would be content with a mutton-chop, and beer from the next ale-house; and accordingly stayed to dine. During the evening Porson said, 'I am quite certain that Mrs. Hoppner keeps some nice bottle for her private drinking, in her own bedroom; so, pray, try if you can lay your hands on it.' His host assured him that Mrs. Hoppner had no such secret stores; but Porson insisting that a search should be made, a bottle was at last discovered in the lady's apartment, to the surprise of Hoppner, and the joy of Porson, who soon finished its contents, pronouncing it to be the best gin he had tasted for a long time. Next day Hoppner, somewhat out of temper, informed his wife that Porson had drunk every drop of her concealed dram. 'Drunk every drop of it!' cried she. 'My God! it was spirits of wine for the lamp!'"

Early in life, Porson accepted the situation of tutor to a young gentleman in the Isle of Wight; but he was soon forced to relinquish that office, in consequence of having been found drunk in a ditch or turnip-field.

He said one night, when he was very drunk, to Dodd, who was pressing him hard in an argument, "Jemmy Dodd, I always despised you when sober, and I'll be d——d if I'll argue with you now that I'm drunk."

When Porson dined with me, (says Rogers,) I used to keep him within bounds; but I frequently met him at various houses where he got completely drunk. He would not scruple to return to the dining-room, after the company had left it, pour into a tumbler the drops remaining in the wine-glasses, and drink off the *omnium gatherum*.

Mr. Rogers once took him to an evening party at William Spencer's, when he was introduced to several women of fashion, Lady Crewe, &c. How do you suppose he entertained them? Chiefly by reciting an immense quantity of old Vauxhall songs. He was far from sober, and at last talked so oddly, that they all retired from him, except Lady Crewe, who boldly kept her ground. Mr. Rogers recollected her saying to him, "Mr. Porson, *that* joke you have borrowed from Joe Miller;" and his rather angry reply, "Madam, it is not in Joe Miller; you will not find it either in the preface or the body of that work, no, nor in the index." Mr. R. adds: I brought him home as far as Piccadilly, where, I am sorry to add, I left him sick in the middle of the street.

A brother of Bishop Maltby invited Porson and Rogers to

spend the evening at his house, and secretly requested Rogers to take Porson away, if possible, before the morning hours. Accordingly, at 12 o'clock, Rogers held up his watch to Porson, saying, "I think it is now full time for us to go home;" and the host, of course, not pressing them to remain longer, away they went. When they got into the street, Porson's indignation burst forth: "I hate," he said, "to be turned out of doors like a dog!"

The Rev. Mr. Hughes, (in the letter just quoted,) tells us how he sat five hours with Porson in a friend's rooms at Cambridge; at the end of which the Professor, having finished the second bottle of sherry, began to clip the King's English, to cry like a child, at the close of his periods, and in other respects to show marks of extreme debility. At length he rose from his chair, staggered to the door, and made his way down stairs, without taking the slightest notice of his companions. In the course of the evening, the Greek Professor was discovered in the outskirts of the town, leaning upon the arm of a dirty bargeman, and amusing him by the most humorous anecdotes.

PORSON'S BREAKFAST.

At this meal, porter was Porson's favourite beverage. One Sunday morning, meeting Dr. Goodall, Provost of Eton, he said, "Where are you going?" "To church." "Where is Mrs. Goodall?" "At breakfast." "Very well, I'll go and breakfast with her." Porson accordingly presented himself before Mrs. Goodall; and being asked what he chose to take, he said, "Porter." It was sent for pot after pot; and the sixth pot was just being carried into the house when Dr. Goodall returned from church.

PORSON'S DINNER.

At one period of his life, Porson was in such straitened circumstances, that he would go without dinner for a couple of days. However, when a dinner came in his way, he would eat very heartily (mutton was his favourite dish,) and lay in, as he used to say, a stock of provision. He had subsisted for three weeks upon a guinea.

Sometimes, at a later period, when he was able enough to

pay for a dinner, he chose, in a fit of abstraction, to go without one. One day, when Rogers asked him to stay and dine, he replied, "Thank you, no; I dined yesterday."

At dinner, and after it, he preferred port to any other wine. He disliked coffee.

PORSON'S MEMORY.

Sometimes, in order to impress a thing upon Paley's memory, he read it a dozen times, and transcribed it six. He was certainly gifted with most extraordinary powers of memory. Dr. Dorvine, of Aberdeen, told Mr. Dyce, that during a visit to London, he *heard Porson declare* that he could repeat Smollett's *Roderic Random* from beginning to end; and Mr. Richard Heber assured Mr. Dyce that soon after the appearance of the *Essay on Irish Bulls*, (by Edgeworth and his daughter,) Porson used, when tipsy, to recite whole pages of it verbatim, with great delight!

"Nothing came amiss to his memory," says Mr. Weston. "He would set a child right in his twopenny fable-book, repeat the whole of the moral tale of the *Dean of Badajoz*, a page of Athenæus on cups, or of Eustathius on Homer, even though he did everything to impair his mental faculties."

Porson himself said that he would undertake to learn by heart a copy of the *Morning Chronicle* in a week. Basil Montague related that Porson, in his presence, and that of some other persons, read a page or two of a book, and then repeated what he had read from memory. "That is very well," said one of the company, "but could the Professor repeat it backwards?" Porson immediately began to repeat it backwards, and failed only in two words.

Still, his remarkable strength of memory was not his talent most to be envied; since many persons who have been possessed of singular and almost miraculous, not to say morbid memories, have been but little distinguished by any other faculty. But Porson's judgment and acuteness were really almost paramount to his memory; and with the addition of those faculties, his memory naturally rendered him capable of much that would have been impossible without it.—*Encyclopædia Britannica*, 8th edit.

Mr. Summers spoke, many years after Porson's death, of the boy's extraordinary memory; and stated that, in fifty years of scholastic life, he had never seen any boys so clever

as the three brothers Porson. All the family were remarkable for memory, but by no means equal to Richard.

PORSON'S FAVOURITE BOOKS.

He delighted in Milton: "If I live," he exclaimed, "I will write an essay to show the world how unjustly Milton has been treated by Johnson."

Porson was passionately fond of Swift's *Tale of a Tub*, and whenever he saw a copy of it on a stall, he would purchase it. He could repeat by heart a quantity of Swift's verses.

His admiration of Pope was extreme. Mr. Dyce has seen the tears roll down his cheeks while he was repeating Pope's lines *To the Earl of Oxford, prefixed to Parnell's Poems;* and Mr. Dyce has seen him weep, while repeating favourite passages from Euripides. While going over Pope's villa at Twickenham, in company with Rogers and Dyce, "Oh! how I should like," said Porson, "to pass the remainder of my days in a home which was the abode of a man so deservedly celebrated."

He was fond of Foote's *Plays*, and would often recite scenes from them.

Junius was one of his favourite authors: he had many passages of him by heart.

He liked Edward Moore's *Fables for the Female Sex*, and he loved to repeat the *Female Seducers*, the fable which moved Dr. Mudge to tears.

He would often carry in his pocket a volume of *A Cordial for Low Spirits*—a very curious collection of controversial pieces.

Porson said: Southey's "*Madoc* will be read—when Homer and Virgil are forgotten—a *bon mot* which Lord Byron spoils as—"when Homer and Virgil are forgotten—but—not till then."

The last book he ever purchased was Watson's *Horace;* the last he ever read was *Pausanias*.

He was fond of reading the Greek physicians, one of whose folios, especially Galen's, he sometimes put under his pillow at night; not, as he used to observe, because he expected medicinal virtue from it, but because his asthma required that his head should be kept high.

Being once asked whether he had read Plutarch, he replied, "He is too much for me."

PORSON'S HANDWRITING.

His fondness for the mechanical employment of his pen has been regretted by some of his biographers, as having tempted him to waste much of his most valuable time on a trifling amusement; but in fact, his mode of writing Greek was fully as much calculated for expedition as for beauty; and those who have not been in the habit of correcting mutilated passages of manuscripts can form no estimate of the immense advantage that is obtained by the complete sifting of every letter, which the mind involuntarily performs whilst the hand is occupied in tracing it; so that, if the correction of Photius was really worth the labour of two years of Porson's life, it would have been scarcely possible to employ the greater part of those years more advantageously than by copying him twice over. Mr. Weston, in speaking of "his matchless penmanship," has observed, not very intelligibly, that "here, indeed, he thought himself surpassed by" another person "not in the stroke, but the sweep, of his letters." What Porson really said on this subject was, that, with respect to "command of hand," that person had the advantage, but he preferred the model on which his own hand was formed. His writing was, in fact, more like that of a scholar, whilst the method explained in Hodgkin's *Calligraphia* exhibits more the appearance of the work of a writing master; holding, however, a middle place between the neatness of Porson and the wonderful accuracy of the country schoolmaster, who made the fac-simile of the Oxford Pindar in the British Museum.

Of this strange fondness for the actual manual operation of writing, a great number of examples might be given. Besides the Photius, Trinity Library possesses a transcript of the *Medea*, which Porson had given to the late R. Hole, and also one of the *Phœnissæ* and of the *Plutus*, from which last the edition in the *Aristophanica* was printed; likewise a copy of the *Roman Eustathius*, with several missing leaves supplied by him in fac-simile. Mr. Luard possesses a copy of the *Mirifici Logarithmorum Canonis Descriptio a Joanne Nepero*, Edin. 1614, with the last page, which had been lost, containing some four hundred figures, supplied in Porson's beautiful hand.

Certainly no one ever wrote like him. The well-known Porsonian Greek types, now so universal in this country, are due to him; and a considerable portion of Mr. Hodgkin's *Calligraphia and Pœcilographia Græca* was copied from his manuscripts. His love of calligraphy seems to have shown itself at a very early age, in practising on the margins of his father's books; though the story of his learning writing and his letters at the same time, by his father's tracing them on the ground with a stick, and making his son copy them, is probably apocryphal.

HIS POLITICS.

In politics, says Mr. Luard, there is no doubt that Porson held opinions opposed to what was in fashion in his day. Mr. Maltby mentions that he would think nothing of toasting Jack Cade at a tavern, at times when such opinions would very easily bring people into trouble. It is amusing to find allusions in his quiet way, while commenting on classical authors, to his own day: thus, in his sketch of Aristophanes' character, where he is speaking of the poet's "detestation of the expensive and ruinous war in which Greece was engaged," it is easy to see that the critic is thinking of the American war, which had just (1783) been brought to a conclusion. So, later, in one of his letters about Sir John Hawkins—"Our present excellent Laureate (Warton) informed his Majesty that there was no true glory in the American war (which I fully believe)."

On another occasion he says:—"In these ticklish times, when to look or think awry is an unpardonable crime, which can be expiated only by fine, banishment, or durance, we are not yet, I trust, prohibited from the discussion of philological questions. Talk of religion, it is odds but you have infidel, blasphemer, atheist, or schismatic, thundered in your ears; touch upon politics, you will be in luck if you are only charged with a *tendency to treason*. . . . Nor is the innocence of your intention any safeguard. It is not the publication that shows the character of the author, *but the character of the author that shows the tendency of the publication.*"

When asked to subscribe to Pitt's statue and shown a long list of subscriptions, he said, "I was thinking the other day I ought to subscribe; but on going to my desk, found that my money was all gone to the income-tax."

"CATECHISM FOR THE SWINISH MULTITUDE."

It was Burke who applied the term "Swinish Multitude" to the common people; and Porson is generally understood to have written for them "A Catechism." It was printed with his knowledge; and its political bearing may be guessed by Richard Carlile, of Fleet-street, having reprinted it. Mr. Watson has included it in the Appendix to his *Life*, where it occupies nine pages.

A notice of this satirical piece will be found in *Facetiæ Cantabrigienses*, edit. 1825, page 83, entitled "Porson's Politics." The writer remarks: "They never interrupted an harmonious intercourse with him, who pays this tribute to his memory, and to whom, in a moment of confidence, he gave, in his own handwriting, a pamphlet written in answer to Mr. Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution*. It is termed *A New Catechism for the Natives of Hampshire*. The humour of the tract consists in playing upon the expression of "the swinish multitude." The following is the beginning and ending of the tract:

Question. What is your name?
Answer. Hog or swine.
Q. Did God make you a hog?
A. God made me man in His own image: the right honourable *Sublime and Beautiful* made me a swine.
Q. How did he make you a swine?
A. By muttering obscure and uncouth spells. He is a dealer in the *black art.*
Q. Who feeds you?
A. Our drivers, the only real men in this country.
Q. How many hogs are you in all?
A. Seven or eight millions.
Q. How many drivers?
A. Two or three thousand.

This curious dialogue thus concludes:

Q. What is the general wish of the hogs at present?
A. To save their bacon.

(*Chorus of Hogs. Amen.*)

Two editions of this tract are in the British Museum. Carlile appears to have reprinted his edition from the *Examiner* newspaper. If we mistake not, this Catechism, or Parody, was quoted by William Hone, in his memorable Trials, as evidence of a Parody by a Professor in one of our Universities.

THE OLD FRENCH INVASION.

The following is said to have been written by Porson during the alarm of the French Invasion, early in the present century. The admixture of Latin and English is ingenious and droll.

Ego nunquam audivi such terrible news
As at this present tempus my senses confuse.
I'm drawn for a miles; I must go cum Marte,
And, comminus ense engage Bonaparte.

Such tempore nunquam videbant majores,
For then their opponents had different mores,
But we will soon prove to the Corsican vaunter
Though times may be changed, Britons never mutantur.

Mehercle, this Consul non potest be quiet,
His word must be lax—and when he says fiat,
Quasi Deus, he thinks, must we run at his nod,
But Britons were ne'er good at running, by G—.

Per mare, I rather am led to opine
To meet British naves he would not incline,
Lest he should in mare profundum be drowned,
Et cum algâ, non laurâ, his caput be crowned.

But allow that this boaster in Britain could land,
Multis cum aliis at his command,
Here are lads who will meet—aye—and properly work 'em,
And speedily send them, ni fallor, in Orcum.

Nunc, let us, amici, join manus et cordis,
And use well the vires Dii Boni afford us;
Then let nations combine, Britain never can fall;
She's multum in parvo—a match for them all.

MISCELLANIES.

A conqueror at the Olympic games applied to Pindar for an ode. The poet required twenty guineas. "I could buy a statue for the sum." "Then buy a statue." Again he applied, and consented to the poet's terms. The ode begins thus: "Unlike a statue, which remains fixed for ever to its pedestal, this ode shall fly over Greece—every bark on the Ægean Sea, every carriage along its shores, shall transport it." (This ode of Pindar was on a victory at the Nemean games. See the fifth Nemean Ode.)

Like Simonides, I would carry all I have about me, pretty nearly. (See the story in Phædrus, lib. iv. fab. 21, entitled "Naufragium Simonidis." The poet was shipwrecked, and to his anxious fellow-passengers, who inquired of him why he

did not endeavour to save some of his goods, he replied, "Mecum mea sunt cuncta"—"I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed." (St. Luke xvi. 3.) Who, from that day to this, has seen a Jew who was a beggar or an agriculturist?

We all speak in metaphors. Those who appear not to do it, only use those which are worn out, and are overlooked as metaphors. The original fellow is therefore regarded as only witty; and the dull are consulted as the wise.

When Porson was told that Pretyman, Bishop of Lincoln, had been left a large estate by a person who had seen him only once, he said, "it would not have happened, if the person had seen him twice."

Nor was he more eulogistic of Bishop Porteus, whom he used to call Bishop *Proteus*, from his having changed his opinions from liberal to illiberal.

Porson set a high value on the Lexicon of Scapula, which he recommended to a gentleman, who wished to commence Greek at the age of forty, and asked him what books he should use, to read through from the first page to the last.

Mr. Fitzgerald, who, for several years, used to inflict his "creaking couplets" upon the guests at the annual Literary Fund Society's Dinner, was, upon one of these occasions, anxious to be introduced to Porson. "Sir," said a gentlemen to him, "I have the honour to present to you Mr. Fitzgerald." Porson was silent. "Sir," recommenced that gentleman, "I have the honour to present to you Mr. Fitzgerald, who recited the verses you have just heard." Porson was silent. "Sir," persisted the gentleman, "I have the honour to present to you Mr. Fitzgerald, who himself composed the verses which you have just heard." "Sir," said Porson, very gently, "I am quite deaf."

To a gentleman, who, at the close of a fierce dispute with Porson, exclaimed, "My opinion of you is most contemptible, Sir;" he retorted, "I never knew an opinion of yours that was not contemptible."

Porson's sister, who married Mr. Siday Hawes, had a strong personal resemblance to the Professor, particularly in the lower features of her face, her tone of voice, and peculiarity of style. She had also the wonderful Porson memory. When she was married, the clergyman, on concluding the ceremony, said to her, "Mrs. Hawes, you have given away a great name to-day."

Porson, in a social party, offered to make a rhyme on any-

thing, when some one suggested one of the Latin gerunds, and he immediately replied,—

> When Dido found Æneas would not come,
> She mourned in silence, and was *Di-do-dum*.

CHARACTER OF PORSON.

The recent publication of Mr. Watson's *Life* of the Professor has exercised the acumen of its critics in estimating the character of Porson's style of criticism, and his influence as a scholar. The resultant opinions vary somewhat with the time.

Dr. Craik, in his excellent memoir in the *Penny Cyclopædia*, had already described Porson as "one of the profoundest Greek scholars, certainly the greatest verbal critic, that any age or country has produced. He possessed every quality which is considered necessary for the formation of a classical scholar—a stupendous memory, unwearied application, great acuteness, strong sound sense, and a lively perception both of the beautiful and of the ridiculous. Besides these qualifications, he enjoyed the rare faculty of guessing or conjecturing, from the imperfect data of corrupt readings, the very words of the author whose text he sought to restore. It is a common mistake to suppose that Porson's reading was confined to the Greek poets, or did not extend much beyond the ordinary range of classical authors. We doubt if there was any classical author whom he had not read, and we are confident that he was familiar with the whole mass of Greek literature. We have looked through the editions of Greek books which belonged to him, and which are now in the hands of different individuals, or in public libraries, and there is not one which does not bear some trace of his careful and critical perusal. He was, besides, an excellent French scholar, and was well versed in the literature of his own country. His English style was terse and elegant, and his *Letters to Travis* convince us that he would have held a high place among English writers, if he had directed his attention to the more popular branches of literature. From some traces which we have observed here and there, we are disposed to believe that Porson would have been a great general philologer, had he lived some years later, and had an opportunity of turning his attention to the linguistic studies of modern scholars. As it

was, he paid some attention to Anglo-Saxon; and perhaps it was only for want of means that he did not apply himself to a wider range of comparative philology."

In Mr. Luard's *Cambridge Essay* we find this estimate:

"In claiming for Porson a higher niche in the temple of critical fame than all his predecessors, we look rather to the influence his writings have had on English scholarship and education than to the actual extent of canons discovered or ground cleared. It is to him, chiefly, that English scholarship (may we be permitted to particularize, especially, Cambridge scholarship?) owes its accuracy and its certainty; and thus, as a branch of education—as a substratum on which to rest other branches of knowledge often infinitely more useful in themselves—really takes as high a rank as any of those studies which can contribute to form the character of a well-educated English gentleman.

"It is very interesting to observe how almost all the scholars of the country joined in contributing to his fame, by editing his posthumous remains: thus Bishop Monk, his successor, and Bishop Blomfield, edited the *Adversaria* from the books and papers in Trinity College (containing his masterly notes on Athenæus and the Greek poets); Professor Dobree edited his notes on Aristophanes and the long-looked-for Photius; Mr. Kidd collected his scattered reviews; the late Dean of Christ Church published his notes on Pausanias and Suidas; while Bishop Turton came forward to defend his literary character."

The following passage from the Essay is also very striking: "The influence he has had upon classical scholarship may be easily tested by comparing a Greek play as edited since his time, with one put forth before him. And we believe that it is in a great measure due to him that classical studies have become the very important branch of education that they are. We see that the emending or unravelling a corrupt or hard passage of a classical author, is not mere guess or chance work, but requires as close an attention and as careful a chain of reasoning as a mathematical problem; and thus, that the real scholar must have been in the habit of cultivating his powers of close reasoning and accurate thought almost, if not quite, as much as the mathematician. Thus, in any of his canons, the rule is stated clearly and distinctly, the exceptions pointed out with equal care, a quantity of instances are brought forward to prove his point, and then the objections

are stated and severally discussed. It is not difficult to trace in Porson's habits of thought the influence that the study of mathematics had upon him.

"He was to his dying day very fond of these studies. There are still preserved many papers of his scribbled over with mathematical calculations; and when the fit seized him in the street, which caused his death, an equation was found in his pocket."

A critic in the *Saturday Review* is inclined to place "perhaps first in merit and singularity, Porson's honesty as a scholar. Of Joseph Scaliger it is said by a distinguished and conscientiously exact scholar, the late Archdeacon Hare, that 'there is a good deal of risk in controverting an assertion made by him. For he deviates from the practice of ordinary scholars, whose wont it is to display all their forces in front, and who often care little about the strength of their line, if they can but make it long enough, filling it up not seldom with men of straw, or with such as are sure to desert on the first attack. Scaliger frequently keeps his main arguments in the background; and many of his conclusions rest, not immediately on any express authorities, but on a profound and subtle combination of the materials with which his boundless learning supplied him.' This is a tolerably accurate description of Porson's process also in dealing with arguments and authorities."

The one great excellence that gave the tone to all his writings, and so much influenced the events of his life, was a love of truth—truth for its own sake, regardless of all consequences. It was this that made him resign his fellowship, when he had no prospect but of the most abject poverty before him—it was this that made him treat Travis with the withering sarcasm with which his *Letters* abound. With this may be joined his utter contempt for money, and for the estimation in which wealth is held for its own sake.

He practised the most scrupulous honesty in all his doings as a critic and as a man. As a critic he used to say, "Whatever you quote or collate, do it fairly and accurately, whether it be *Joe Miller*, or *Tom Thumb*, or *The Three Children Sliding on the Ice*;" and his practice was in conformity with his precept. As a man, he appears to have wronged no one in any way at any period of his life. "He is not only a matchless scholar," said Parr, who thought more highly of Porson than Porson thought of him, "but an honest, a very honest, man."

"There is one quality of the mind," says Bishop Turton, "in which it may be confidently affirmed that Mr. Porson had no superior; I mean the most pure and inflexible love of truth. Under the influence of this principle he was cautious, and patient, and persevering in his researches; and scrupulously accurate in stating facts as he found them. All who were intimate with him bear witness to this noble part of his character; and his works confirm the testimony of his friends."

Some have thought (says Mr. Luard,) that he would have been as great a statesman or as great a general as he was a scholar, and have lamented that his great powers were not spent upon subjects that benefit mankind more than Greek criticism. But it must be remembered that a man's course of life is not always, or even usually, in his own power; and that each person's object should be to excel in that particular course to which he has been called. It is a foolish charge to bring against a statesman that he is not a poet, or against a historian that he is not a general. The person who holds the first place in any department of learning or of action is one who entitles himself to the regard and the remembrance of posterity; and, to use the words of Dr. Young (*Encycl. Brit.*, art. Porson), "As far as regards the possession of a combination of the faculties which Porson did cultivate, he appears to have been decidedly the most successful of any man on record in the same department."

Although Porson was in many respects irregular, and often idle, or even intemperate, yet what he did perform as a critic may be allowed to leave a large balance, at the end of his life, in favour of his general industry, when compared with that of most of his countrymen. Certainly, however, neither Salmasius nor Casaubon, with all their learning, much less Scaliger, with all his industry and parade, nor even Bentley himself, with all his talent and acuteness, was at all comparable to Porson in his own department, that is, as a sound, accurate, and refined Greek critic.

Bishop Blomfield considered Porson to add to the varied erudition and universal research of Valckenaer and Ruhnken, a nicety of ear and acquaintance with the laws of metre, which the former possessed but imperfectly, and the latter not at all.

The following evidence of Porson's kindly nature is the testimony of an intelligent and trustworthy man, who aided the Librarian in his duties at the London Institution:

Mr. Savage, in communicating to Dr. Clarke several of the particulars of Porson's last hours, concludes his account thus:—I cannot let this opportunity escape me, our official situations bringing us a good deal together, without being allowed to lament, in common with his best and most intimate friends, the loss of so pleasant and agreeable an acquaintance. For, to the manners of a gentleman, and the most gigantic powers of learning and criticism, he joined the inoffensiveness of a child; and I cannot help wishing, that some persons who have (with no common industry, especially since his decease,) been active in bringing his faults before the world, had been endowed with a small portion of some of his good qualities, one of which, among many others, was, *never to speak evil of the moral character of any man.*

CAREER OF PORSON.

This admirable *précis* is from the *Saturday Review:*

"Richard Porson was the son of a Norfolk weaver, in days when looms were worked at in cottages, and the workman was not shut up in heated factories. His father was, moreover, clerk of the parish, and at a time when to read and write were rare accomplishments in a village, this office betokened some degree of cultivation. From his father Porson derived a strong memory, and a considerable knowledge of arithmetic; and from his mother, limited as was her education, a taste for poetry, and especially for Shakspeare's plays. His two brothers and a sister were also remarkable for their abilities, and the household, poor as it was, was no unbefitting cradle for a man of genius. Porson hardly deserves to be reckoned among men raised to eminence by their own energy. The paths of learning were made smooth for him in a remarkable manner, from the cottage in East Ruston to the professorial chair in Cambridge. Johnson, at the age at which Porson died, had scarcely emerged from need and obscurity. Burke was writing for booksellers, and Southey toiling for his year's income, long after the period at which Porson was in haven. Had he known how to use his fortune, 'melancholy had *not* marked him for her own.' For, first, the curate of the parish, struck by the boy's abilities and inclination for reading all kinds of books, took him under his care and

educated him gratuitously with his own sons. Next, on the curate's report of his tenacious memory and his strong and comprehensive intellect, a number of gentlemen paid his expenses at Eton and Cambridge until a Fellowship at Trinity College rendered him independent of their bounty; and finally when, through conscientious scruples, he declined taking orders, a second fund was raised to enable him to procure the prime necessaries, 'food, clothes, and fire,' which so many men rack brain and health to obtain."

"In his thirty-fourth year he became Regius Professor of Greek in the University of Cambridge; and though he could not be passing rich with forty pounds a year—the stipend of the Professorship—neither with the interest of the capital which had been invested by his trustees, yet from that seat, and with his already high reputation for learning, he might have ensured himself a liberal income by doing what none could do so well—correcting, editing, and illustrating the dramatic and oratorical literature of Greece. Another and scarcely less important field of literature was open to him. Porson had all the qualities essential to success in periodical writing—profound learning in one great province of literature, an omnivorous appetite for books, a strong epigrammatic and even sarcastic style, and a memory supplying him with boundless stores of illustrations for his principal themes. The Monthly and Critical Reviews of his day, indeed, were not such paymasters as the Reviews and Magazines of the present one; yet a moderate amount of labour in their pages, combined with editions of Greek plays, histories, and speeches, would have far more than compensated Porson for the loss of his Fellowship. A third source of honourable independence, and which was really part of his official duty as Professor, would have been the delivery of lectures on Greek literature. That no man could have equalled him in expounding the secrets of the Greek language, few will doubt; and his contributions to Reviews, and especially his *Prælectio*, read in the schools when he became Professor, render it equally probable that none would have surpassed him had he passed from verbal to æsthetic criticism. But all these opportunities of earning honourably pudding and praise availed him nothing. Two Mordecais sat at his gate—thirst and procrastination."

CHARADES AND RIDDLES.

Porson delighted in this playful exercise of his talents, mostly for the amusement of ladies, whose friendship he enjoyed. The following Charades and Riddles (with the solutions,) are quoted from Nos. 17 and 19 of the *Crypt, or Receptacle for Things Past*, printed and published at Ringwood, Hants, in 1827:

TEN CHARADES BY PROFESSOR PORSON.

I.

If nature and fortune had plac'd me with you
On my *first*, we my *second* might hope to obtain;
I might marry you, were I my *third*, it is true,
But such marriage would only embitter my pain.
[*Porson.*]

II.

My *first* is the lot that is destin'd by fate
For my *second* to meet with in every state;
And my *third* is by many philosophers reckon'd
To bring very often my *first* to my *second*.
[*Woman.*]

III.

My *first*, tho' your house, nay your life, he defends,
You ungratefully name like the wretch you despise;
My *second*, I speak it with grief, comprehends
All the brave, and the good, and the learn'd and the wise.
Of my *third* I have little or nothing to say,
Except that it tolls the departure of the day.
[*Curfew.*]

IV.

The child of a peasant, Rose thought it no shame
To toil at my *first* all the day;
When her father grew rich and a farmer became,
My *first* to my *second* gave way.

Then she married a merchant, who brought her to town;
To this eminent station preferr'd,
Of my *first* and my *second* unmindful she's grown,
And gives all her time to my *third*.
[*Spinnet.*]

V.

My *first* is the nymph I adore,
The sum of her charms is my *second*,—
I was going to call it my *third*,—
But I counted a million and more,
'Till I found they could never be reckon'd,
So I quickly rejected the word.

[*Thousand.*]

VI.

My *first* in ghosts, 'tis said, abounds,
And wheresoe'er she walks her rounds,
My *second* never fails to go,
Yet oft attends her mortal foe;
If with my *third* you quench your thirst,
You sink for ever in my *first*.

[*Nightingale.*]

VII.

My *first* is expressive of no disrespect,
Yet I never shall call you it while you are by;
If my *second* you still are resolv'd to reject,
As dead as my *third* I shall speedily lie.

[*Herring.*]

VIII.

My *first's* of unity a sign;
My *second* ere we knew to plant,
We us'd upon my *third* to dine,
"If all be true that poets chaunt."

[*Acorn.*]

IX.

Your cat does my *first* in your ear,—
O that I were admitted as near!
In my *second*, I've held you, my fair,
So long that I almost despair;
But my prey if at last I o'ertake,
What a glorious *third* I shall make!

[*Purchase.*]

X.

My *first*, with more than Quaker's pride,
At your most solemn duty
You keep, nor deign to throw aside,
E'en though it veils your beauty.

My *second* on your cheek or lip
May kindle Cupid's fire,
While from your eye or nose's tip
It ne'er provokes desire.

But if my *third* you entertain
For your unhappy poet,
In mercy, Chloe, spare his pain,
Nor ever let him know it.

[*Hatred.*]

The following are from the Latin of Porson :—

I.

Though small in form, yet tow'ring steeple-high,
Perch'd on one leg, before the storm I fly.
Fix'd, yet with giddy restlessness I move,
Constant in nothing but the will to rove.
Your traveller oft, who reads th' uncertain skies,
Finds me, though senseless, than himself more wise :
Yet friends like us, sagacious reader, dread,
In state as lofty, but as light in head.

[*A Vane.*]

II.

Give me but water, and I feast on wine ;
When water fails, on water I must dine.

[*A Miller.*]

III.

Heat, rain, and frost, my sturdy trunk defies,
My hue unchanging with the changeful skies.
To grace their sons two Gods have woo'd me long,
Mars with a sword, and Phœbus with a song ;
Though now, her lord to feast with rich repast,
By cookmaid's hand in fire and water cast.
Then save me, friends, in mercy guess my name,—
Guess,—and a scrap of what you find me, claim.

[*A Laurel.*]

IV.

Eyes never clos'd, yet blind both night and day,—
Mouth gaping wide, yet not a word to say ;—
Would you these eyes should see, this mouth should speak?
Join yours to mine, it shall be as you seek.

Art's varied hand my shifting features show,
Now grim with terror, now with beauty glow:
O'er dance and scenic pomp I now preside,
Now sin, deceit, love, anger, 'neath me hide;
Religion, honesty, my skill detest,
Which bids the knave look saintly as the best.
Riddles, like this, and mysteries I conceal;
Once snatch me off, my secret you reveal.

[*A Mask.*]

V.

In shape a reed, of brittle ware,—by turns,
Like kindled hearth, my belly smokes and burns.
Clown, soldier, sailor, love me, clasp, and kiss,
Call me their darling,—sweetest, only bliss!
Great lords I little know; yet they who sip
My fragrant draught, reject it at the lip.
Discourse I furnish, cares and griefs restrain,
And purge with clouds the vapours of the brain.
Age wears my forehead white, and age, good lack!
With fate more cruel wears my body black.
Yet see me into air my breath resign,
Too just an emblem of my life, and thine!

[*A Pipe.*]

THE REV. SYDNEY SMITH.

BIRTH OF SYDNEY SMITH.

This masterly divine, wit and humourist was born in the village of Woodford, in Essex, in 1771. His father, Mr. Robert Smith, was a man of sagacious mind, with an extraordinary talent for observation, which, we learn from his daughter, Lady Holland,* he indulged "partly in wandering over the world for many years, and partly in diminishing his fortune by buying, altering, spoiling, and then selling, about nineteen different places in England; till, in his old age, he at last settled at Bishop's Lydiard, near Taunton, in Somersetshire, where he died." His wife was the youngest daughter of an emigrant from Languedoc; and Sydney was fond of attributing a little of his constitutional gaiety to this infusion of French blood. She was a woman of charming mind.

We have few records of his boyhood, mostly passed in the forest scenery of the neighbourhood of Woodford, the rural beauty of which he has depicted with freshness and truth.

AT WINCHESTER SCHOOL.

Sydney was the second of a family of four brothers and one sister. Robert, the eldest, with Cecil, the third son, was sent to Eton, where he was a contributor to the *Microcosm*: he was named by his schoolfellows "Bobus." Sydney was sent, at six years of age, to the Rev. Mr. March's school, at Southampton; and thence, with his youngest brother, to the William of Wykeham's foundation at Winchester, where the hunger and neglect he suffered was never forgotten by him. He rose, in due time, to be captain of the school, and, with his brother, carried off all the college prizes for Latin verses; of which Sydney tells us he made ten thousand while at

* A Memoir of the Reverend Sydney Smith. By his Daughter, Lady Holland. With a selection from his Letters, edited by Mrs. Austin. 2 Vols. 8vo. Longman and Co., 1855.

school. He was equally active out of school, and thus early showed that inventive faculty which ever afterwards distinguished him,—by constructing a catapult, to capture a neighbour's turkey.

He used to relate that a neighbour of note one day found him reading Virgil under a tree, (perhaps, *recubans sub tegmine fagi,*) when the gentleman took the book out of Sydney's hand, patted him on the head, gave him a shilling, and said, "Clever boy! clever boy! that is the way to conquer the world." Lady Holland often heard her father speak of this incident as one of the first things that stimulated him in acquiring knowledge. Such instances of encouragement have, doubtless, had more to do with producing men of great mind, than all the rigid discipline in the world.

Soon after leaving Winchester, Sydney was sent to Mount Villiers, in Normandy, where, *en pension*, in six months, he perfected himself in French, which he spoke fluently. Here, in the fury of the French Revolution, he was enrolled in a Jacobin Club. One day he accompanied two friends to Cherbourg; when the latter commenced sketching, notwithstanding Smith's remonstrance, and prediction that they would, if seen, be hung on the next lantern-post; and it required all Sydney's persuasive powers to save his friends from their impending fate.

AT NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD.

Smith, having left Winchester as captain, was sent to New College, where he was entitled to a Scholarship, and afterwards to a Fellowship. But the college society was expensive, and he kept out of it. His income did not exceed 100*l.* a-year, yet he did not get into debt; and having obtained his Fellowship, in 1790, he was left to his own resources, the allowance by his father being then discontinued.

An amusing reminiscence of this period appears in one of his Cathedral Letters, in which he says: "I was at school and college with the Archbishop of Canterbury: fifty-three years ago, he knocked me down with a chess-board for checkmating him; and he is now attempting to take away my patronage. I believe these are the only two acts of violence he ever committed in his life: the interval has been one of gentleness, kindness, and the most amiable and high-principled courtesy to his clergy."

HIS CURACY

Mr. Smith's inclination would have led him to the Bar; his father had brought up the elder brother, Robert, to that profession, and fitted out the other two sons for India; and Sydney had nearly been sent as supercargo to China, when his father urged him to enter the Church. In 1796, he took the degree of A.M., and soon after obtained the curacy of Nether Avon, near Amesbury, in Wiltshire,—a village of a few cottages and farm-houses in the midst of Salisbury Plain.

What a solitude must this have been to a man of Sydney's conversational accomplishments! A butcher's cart brought from Salisbury the joint of meat weekly; for the poor curate tells us that he often dined on potatoes sprinkled with catsup. He had few books; he was too poor to keep a horse, and so took long walks, in one of which, by the way, he had nearly been lost in a violent snow-storm on the Plain.

Soon after he settled at Nether Avon, he had to marry his eldest brother Robert to Miss Vernon, aunt to the present Marquis of Lansdowne. The marriage took place in the library at Bowood; and Mr. Smith, writing to his mother, says, "All I can tell you of it is, that he cried, she cried, and I cried;" "the only tears," Lady Holland touchingly adds, "I believe, this marriage ever produced, save those we shed on her grave."

In after years, when Mr. Smith became a frequent visitor at Bowood, and the cottage of his friend, Thomas Moore, what a contrast the charming society which he there enjoyed must have presented to his dreary abode at Nether Avon. This, however, had its sunshine. The squire, in the few months he resided there, kept up the good old fashion of asking the curate to dine with him on Sunday, and he at once found what a delightful companion he had gained; the invitations grew more frequent; the squire and the curate became great friends, which led to a change that may be said to have had more influence upon the prospects and fortune of Mr. Smith than any other event of his life. This arose out of a proposition from his patron, Mr. Hicks Beach, M.P. for Cirencester, that he should accompany his son to reside at the University of Weimar, in Saxony; and the offer was gladly accepted.

EDINBURGH SOCIETY.

When the Rev. Sydney Smith left his "curacy in the middle of Salisbury Plain" to travel with the Squire's son to Weimar, before they could get there, Germany became the seat of war, and in stress of politics, they put into Edinburgh, in 1797, where Mr. Smith remained with his pupil five years.

Lady Holland sketches the easy and agreeable footing of society in Edinburgh at this period: the meetings of friends at each other's homes, and the delightful little suppers in the oyster-cellars; and many years after, when her father had become the accomplished table-wit, he looked back to these happy Scotch friendships, exclaiming: "When shall I see Scotland again? Never shall I forget the happy days passed there, amidst odious smells, barbarous sounds, bad suppers, excellent hearts, and most enlightened and cultivated understandings!"

One evening, when he was at his old friend, Lord Woodhouselee's country-house, near Edinburgh, a storm arose, and the wind almost rattled out the windows. "Why do you not stop them?" said Smith; "give me a knife, a bit of wood, and a screw, and I will cure it in a moment;" this he did, and the fastening was named *Sydney's Button*, which was there preserved fifty years after.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCOTCH.

That Smith loved the Scotch is evident; as well as that he delighted himself and everybody else by quizzing their peculiarities. Who can forget his saying that "it requires a surgical operation to get a joke well into a Scotch understanding. The only idea of wit, or rather that inferior variety of this electric talent which prevails occasionally in the North, and which under the name of WUT, is so infinitely distressing to people of good taste, is laughing immoderately at stated intervals."

Equally alive was he to their benevolence of heart, of which, "no nation has so large a stock: if you meet with an accident, half Edinburgh immediately flocks to your door to inquire after your *pure* hand or your *pure* foot, and with a degree of interest that convinces you their whole hearts are in the inquiry."

"Their temper stands anything but an attack on their climate: even the enlightened mind of Jeffrey cannot shake off the illusion that myrtles flourish at Craig Crook.* In vain I have represented to him that they are of the genus *Carduus*, and pointed out their prickly peculiarities. In vain I have reminded him that I have seen hackney-coaches drawn by four horses in the winter, on account of the snow; that I had rescued a man blown flat against my door by the violence of the winds, and black in the face; that even the experienced Scotch fowls did not venture to cross the streets, but sidled along, tails aloft, without venturing to encounter the gale. Jeffrey sticks to his myrtle illusions, and treats my attacks with as much contempt as if I had been a wild visionary, who had never breathed his caller air, nor lived and suffered under the rigour of his climate, nor spent five years in discussing metaphysics and medicine in that garret of the earth —that knuckle-end of England—that land of Calvin, oatcakes, and sulphur." Then, only think of his describing Edinburgh as "that energetic and unfragrant city."

TAKING THE LEAD.

The Rev. Mr. Burgon relates, on the authority of Tytler, the historian, the following anecdote of Sydney Smith, who in the Edinburgh circles was already as cheerful, noisy, and vivaciously humorous, as he remained throughout life:

Besides Scott, Mackintosh, and Sydney Smith, Lord Woodhouselee had invited to his table several first-rate talkers; and the usual rivalry ensued. Scott contented himself with telling some delightful stories, and resigning when Mackintosh seemed eager to be heard. Lord Jeffrey flashed in with something brilliant, but was in turn outshone by some more fortunate talker. So much impatience was felt to lead the conversation, that no one had leisure to eat. Only Sydney was silent. He was discussing the soup, the fish, and the roast. In short, he partook leisurely of everything at table; until the last act was drawing to a close, and he had completely dined. He then delivered himself of something preposterous—laughed at it immoderately—and infecting everyone present with his mirth, at once set the table in a roar. It is needless to add that he never parted with his

* Elsewhere he says: "In Scotland they are not to be believed on their oath, where the climate of Scotland is concerned."

advantage, but triumphantly led the conversation for the remainder of the evening, keeping the other guests convulsed with the humour of the only man present who had dined.

HOW THE EDINBURGH REVIEW WAS ESTABLISHED.

Among the first persons Sydney Smith became acquainted with were Lord Jeffrey, Lord Murray, and Lord Brougham; all of them maintaining liberal opinions upon political subjects. One day they happened to meet in the eighth or ninth story or flat in Buccleugh-place, the elevated residence of the then Mr. Jeffrey. Smith proposed they should set up a Review: this was acceded to with acclamation. He was appointed editor, and remained long enough in Edinburgh to edit the first number of the *Edinburgh Review*. He proposed for the motto of the Review,

"*Tenui, musam meditamur avena.*"
"We cultivate literature upon a little oatmeal."

But this was too near the truth to be admitted, and so the present grave motto was taken from *Publius Syrus*, of whom, Smith was sure, none of the party had ever read a line. When he left Edinburgh, the journal fell into the stronger hands of Lord Jeffrey and Lord Brougham, and reached the highest point of popularity and success.

Mr. Smith also contributed from England many articles: these have been reprinted in his Collected Works, in the preface to which, written in 1839, he remarks: "To appreciate the value of the *Edinburgh Review*, the state of England at the period when that journal began should be had in remembrance. The Catholics were not emancipated —the Corporation and Test Acts were unrepealed—the Game Laws were horribly oppressive—steel traps and spring guns were set all over the country—prisoners tried for their lives could have no counsel—Lord Eldon and the Court of Chancery pressed heavily upon mankind—libel was punished by the most cruel and vindictive imprisonments—the principles of Political Economy were little understood—the law of Debt and of Conspiracy were upon the worst possible footing—the enormous wickedness of the Slave Trade was tolerated—a thousand evils were in existence, which the talents of good and evil men have since lessened or removed; and these

effects have been not a little assisted by the honest boldness of the *Edinburgh Review*."

"From the beginning of this century to the death of Lord Liverpool, was an awful period for those who had the misfortune to entertain liberal opinions, and were too honest to sell them for the ermine of a judge, or the lawn of a prelate:—a long and hopeless career in your profession,—the chuckling grin of noodles,—the sarcastic leer of the genuine political rogue, prebendaries, deans, and bishops, made over your head,—reverend renegadoes advanced to the highest dignities of the Church, for helping to rivet the fetters of Catholic and Protestant Dissenters,—and no more chance of a Whig administration than of a thaw in Zembla,—these were the penalties exacted for liberality of opinion at that period; and not only was there *no pay, but there were many stripes*."

The second article in the first number of the *Edinburgh Review* was by Smith: the subject, Dr. Parr; and the doctor's wig,—"which, whilst it trespasses on the orthodox magnitude of perukes in the anterior parts, scorns even episcopal limits behind, and swells out into boundless convexity of frizz—the *μέγα θαῦμα* of barbers, the terror of the literary world."

In the review of Dr. Reynel, in the same number, Smith defended his own ideas on preaching:—and which he afterwards enforced in the preface to his sermons. "It is commonly answered to any animadversions upon the eloquence of the English pulpit, that a clergyman is to recommend himself not by his eloquence, but by the purity of his life, and the soundness of his doctrine; an objection good enough if any connection could be pointed out between eloquence, heresy, and dissipation; but, if it were possible for a man to *live well, preach well*, and *teach well*, at the same time, such objections resting only upon a supposed incompatibility of these good qualities, are duller than the dulness they defend."

It may here be interesting to say a few words of the other distinguished contributors to the *Edinburgh Review*, at this early period, of which Mr. Brougham became one of the chief. "After the third number," says Jeffrey, "he was admitted, and did more for us than anybody." They were all young men: Allen was thirty-two years of age; Sydney Smith was thirty-one; Jeffrey was twenty-nine; Thomas Brown, the metaphysician, was twenty-four; Horner was twenty-four; and Brougham was twenty-three. Brougham,

after he had published his work on Colonial Policy, concentrated his literary efforts on the *Review*. The early numbers had been so immediately and largely successful, that Constable, the publisher, had cheerfully acquiesced in the proposal, that the articles, at first gratuitous, should be paid for at the rate of 10*l.* a sheet. Of all the contributors during Jeffrey's long editorship, which began in 1803, and closed in 1828, and during which the rate of payment was more than doubled, Brougham was the most industrious and versatile.

As stated above, Smith edited the first number of the *Review*, published in 1802, and was succeeded by Brougham, who filled the office until it was undertaken by Jeffrey, in 1803, as recorded by Mr. Thomas Campbell, in the *Metropolitan*.

Sydney Smith, in talking of the fun he had had in the early times of the *Edinburgh Review*, mentions an article on Ritson, which he and Mr. Brougham had written together; and one instance of their joint contribution was as follows:—"We take for granted (wrote Brougham) that Mr. Ritson supposes Providence to have had some share in producing him—though for what inscrutable purpose (added Sydney) we profess ourselves unable to conjecture."

A competent authority, speaking of the beneficial results of the establishment of the *Edinburgh Review*, says:—"If the good done thereby should be apportioned out, a large share would fall to the Rev. Sydney Smith."

HIS MARRIAGE.

In 1800, Mr. Sydney Smith left Edinburgh for England, to marry Miss Pybus, who had been the schoolfellow, and was the friend of his sister, Maria. Her brother, Mr. Charles Pybus (one of the Lords of the Admiralty, under Mr. Pitt), strongly opposed the match, so that the young couple had nothing to expect from him on their start in life. Mr. Smith's worldly wealth consisted of six silver tea-spoons, which he one day flung joyfully into his wife's lap, exclaiming, "There, Kate, you lucky girl, I give you all my fortune." But Mrs. Pybus had made for her daughter some provision, by bestowing on her a necklace of a double row of pearls, of very fine quality, which she sold to a dealer in such valuables for 500*l.* They remained in the shopkeeper's stock for several years, when he asked fifteen hundred pounds for the

necklace. Shortly after the marriage, Mr. Beach presented Mr. Smith with one thousand pounds, for his care of his eldest son, his pupil: and this sum he very prudently put into the Stocks. These means were moderate, indeed; yet within a year, Mr. Smith most generously contrived to lend an aged gentlewoman in Edinburgh one hundred pounds, and to contribute 40*l.* towards the outfit of a poor scholar who had obtained an appointment in India.

Mr. Smith was now about to become a father: he had repeatedly wished that the child might be a daughter, and "that she might be born with one eye, that he might never lose her." The daughter came in due time, but with two eyes; and her father was so proud of her that he stole her out of the nursery to show her to his literary friends, the future Edinburgh Reviewers.

CHAPLAIN AT THE FOUNDLING HOSPITAL.

When Mr. Smith came to London, in 1804, he was elected one of the chaplains to the Foundling Hospital, where his sermons were especially attractive. The Foundling charity had been so often the object of misapprehension in the public mind that Mr. Smith's exertions were soon directed to setting his hearers right upon the matter. Thus, in one of his sermons he says:

"A very unfounded idea exists in the minds of some men little acquainted with the principles on which we proceed, that the doors of this Hospital are flung open to the promiscuous reception of infants, and that every mother can here find an asylum for her offspring, whatever be her pretensions as a virtuous mother, or a mother striving by every exertion of industry to give her children creditable support. If this were so, this institution would aim directly, and in the most unqualified manner, at the destruction of two virtues on which the happiness of society principally depends—the affection of parents, and the virtue of women." He then says: "The object has been uniformly to distinguish between hardened guilt and the first taint of vice. By sheltering and protecting once, to reclaim for ever after, and not to doom to eternal infamy for one single stain of guilt.

"The fair and just way to estimate degrees of guilt is to oppose them to degrees of temptation; and no one can know more perfectly than the conductors of this charity, the abomi-

nable artifices by which the poor women who come to them for relief have been ruined, and the cruelty with which they have been abandoned. My brethren, do not believe that these are the mere casualties of vice, and the irregularities of passion, which, though well governed in the main, degenerate into occasional excess. The mothers whom we relieve have been too often ruined by systematic profligacy,—by men, the only object and occupation of whose life it is to discover innocence, and to betray it. There are men in this great city who live only for such a purpose, who are the greatest and the most dreadful curses that the earth carries upon its surface. My dear brethren, if I were to show you in this church the figure of a wretched woman, a brutal, shameless creature, clothed in rags, and mouldering with disease;—if I were to tell you she had once been good and happy, that she once had that chance of salvation which we all have this day;—if I were to show you the man who had doomed her to misery in this world, and to hell in the world to come, what would your feelings be? If I were to bring you another as sick and as wretched as her, and were to point out the same man as the cause of her ruin, how would your indignation rise! But if I were to tell you that the constant occupations of this man were to search for innocence and to ruin it; that he was a seducer by profession; that the only object for which he existed was to gratify his infamous passions at every expense of human happiness, would you not say that his life was too bad for the mercy of God? If the earth were to yawn for him as it yawned for Dathan and Abiram, is there one eye would be lifted up to ask for mercy for his soul? It is from such wretches as these that we strive to rescue unhappy women, to bring them back to God, to secure them from the scorn of the world that would break their hearts, and drive them into the deepest gulf of sin.

"But this is not all: to the cruelty of seduction is generally added the baseness of abandoning its object—of leaving to perish in rags and in hunger a miserable woman, bribed by promises and oaths of eternal protection and regard. Now, my brethren, let us be just even to sinners, let us be merciful even to seducers in the midst of horror for their crimes; let us fix before our eyes every circumstance that can extenuate them, let us place by the side of guilt the temptation, and judge them as we hope to be judged at the perilous season by the Great Judge of us all. Let us call seduction the effect of youth and passion, still we have a

right to expect all the compensation of good which youth and passion commonly afford, if we allow to them all the indulgence they usually require; but what of youth or passion is there in forgetting the unprotected weakness of women—in starving a creature whom you have ruined—in flying from her for fear she should ask you for bread? Does youth thus unite fervour with meanness? Does it, without a single compensatory virtue, combine its own vices and the vices of every other period of life? Is it violent and sordid, avaricious and impassioned, the slave of every other feeling, and the master of generous compassion alone?

"This is not youth; this has nothing to do with the origin of life:—it is cold and callous profligacy begun in brutal sensuality, fostered by irreligion, strengthened by association with bad men, and become so hardened, that it laughs at the very misery it creates. These are the feelings, and these the men whose cruelty we are obliged to alleviate, and whose victims we are destined to save. Is there any friend of virtue, however rigid, who can say that such an application of charity, so scrupulous and so discriminating, is not a solid augmentation of human happiness? That it does not extend the dominion of the Gospel, and narrow the boundaries of sin?

"But let those who conceive that the claims of even such unhappy women should be rejected, consider what it is they do reject: they reject the weakness of the sex; they are deaf to the voice of ruined innocence; they refuse assistance to youth, shuddering at the gulf of infamy; they would turn out an indigent mother to the merciless world, at a period when she demands all that charity can afford, or compassion feel! But, whatever be the crimes of the parents, and whatever views different individuals may take of the relief extended to them, there is no man who thinks that the children should perish for their crimes, or that those shall be doomed to suffer any misery who have committed no fault. Therefore, this part of the institution is as free from the shadow of blame as every other part is free from the reality."

Mr. Smith seems to have obtained the preachership at the Foundling Hospital through the interest of Sir Thomas Bernard, one of the most active promoters of the interests of the charity. The salary was but 50*l.* a-year. Mr. Smith resided in Doughty-street; and Lady Holland tells us, that her father had thus early obtained the acquaintance, and friendship of several eminent lawyers living in that neighbour-

hood; the most distinguished of whom were Sir S. Romilly, Mr. Scarlett (afterwards Lord Abinger), and Sir J. Mackintosh. To these may be added Dr. Marcet, M. Dumont, Mr. Whishaw, Lord Dudley (then Mr. Ward), Mr. Sharpe, Mr. Rogers, &c.

Mr. Smith likewise officiated at Berkeley Chapel, and at Fitzroy Chapel, during the greater part of the time he remained in the metropolis.

CHARACTER OF THE ENGLISH.

One of the earliest sermons which Mr. Smith preached in London was to a large body of volunteers, during the invasion alarm of 1804, which he closed with this feeling tribute: "I have a boundless confidence in the English character; I believe that they have more real religion, more probity, more knowledge, and more genuine worth, than exists in the whole world besides; they are the guardians of pure Christianity; and from this prostituted nation of merchants (as they are in derision called) I believe more heroes will spring up in the hour of danger than all the ordinary nations of ancient and modern Europe have ever produced. Into the hands of God, then, and His ever-merciful Son, we cast ourselves, and wait in humble patience the result. First, we ask for victory; but if that cannot be, we have only one other prayer—we implore for death."

AT THE ROYAL INSTITUTION.

For three successive sessions, Mr. Smith gave, at the Royal Institution, a course of lectures on Moral Philosophy, which, through his charming voice and manner, and his mode of "manufacturing philosophy," became so popular, that all Albemarle-street and part of Grafton-street were rendered impassable by the carriages of the visitors during the time of the delivery of the lecture.* "They remain," says Dr. Marcet, "but he who gave a very soul to them is gone! He who at one moment inspired his hearers with such awe and reverence by the solemn piety of his manner, that his discourse seemed converted into a sermon, at others, by the brilliancy of his wit, made us die of laughing."

* These were "the high and palmy days" of the Royal Institution, when, in addition to the intellectual philosophy of Sydney Smith's lectures, Humphry Davy was developing those brilliant researches in chemical philosophy which entitled the Institution to a somewhat higher rank than being "the workshop of the Royal Society."

Mr. Horner, who called Mr. Smith the Bishop of Mickleham, for the reason stated below,* described his Lordship's success as "beyond all possible conjecture—from six to eight hundred hearers—not a seat to be procured, even if you go there an hour before the time. Nobody else, to be sure, could have executed such an undertaking with the least chance of success. For who could make such a mixture of odd paradox, quaint fun, manly sense, liberal opinions, and striking language?"

Here is a specimen of the sterling sense displayed in these lectures:—"I solemnly declare that, but for the love of knowledge, I should consider the life of the meanest hedger and ditcher as preferable to that of the greatest and richest man: for the fire of our minds is like the fire which the Persians burn in the mountains—it flames night and day, is immortal, and not to be quenched! Upon something it must act and feed—upon the pure spirit of knowledge, or upon the foul dregs of polluting passions. Therefore, when I say, in conducting your understanding, love knowledge with a great love, with a vehement love, with a love coeval with life, what do I say but love innocence—love virtue—love purity of conduct—love that which, if you are rich and great, will sanctify the blind fortune which has made you so, and make men call it justice—love that which, if you are poor, will render your poverty respectable, and make the proudest feel it unjust to laugh at

* In allusion to Mickleham, the village in Surrey where Mr. Sydney Smith was accustomed to meet his friends at Fredley Farm, the beautiful retreat of his friend, Mr. Richard Sharpe—"Conversation Sharpe." "The Farm of Fredley" was part of the original manor of Mickleham, escheated to the crown in the reign of William Rufus; and with its beautiful Anglo-Norman church, by their venerable antiquity, are almost entitled to be the seat of a bishopric.

In one of those playful productions of kindly humour which grace Mr. Sharpe's volume of *Letters and Essays in Prose and Verse*, we find these lines "to a friend" at Fredley:

Not without hope that this may find you
At * *, business left behind you,
Reclin'd beneath that ancient yew
Whence most the landscape charms the view,
Or strolling o'er the busy farm,
With Jane or Sarah on your arm:
But they, a side-saddle for their seat,
Scamper on other people's feet,
Up fam'd Box-hill, or Mickleham-down,
Or to buy pins in Dorking town.

the meanness of your fortunes—love that which will comfort you, adorn you, and never quit you—which will open to you the kingdom of thought and all the boundless regions of conception, as an asylum against the cruelty, the injustice, and the pain that may be your lot in the outer world—that which will make your motives habitually great and honourable, and light up in an instant a thousand noble disdains at the very thought of meanness and of fraud! Therefore, if any young man here have embarked his life in the pursuit of knowledge, let him go on without doubting or fearing the event; let him not be intimidated by the cheerless beginnings of knowledge, by the darkness from which she springs, by the difficulties which hover around her, by the wretched habitations in which she dwells, by the want and sorrow which sometimes journey in her train; but let him ever follow her as the angel that guards him, and as the genius of his life. She will bring him out at last into the light of day, and exhibit him to the world comprehensive in acquirements, fertile in resources, rich in imagination, strong in reasoning, and powerful above his fellows, in all the relations and in all the offices of life."

These lectures were profitable to Mr. Smith, and by this means he furnished a house which he had taken in Orchard-street, Portman-square, where he resided so long as he remained in London.

A SERPENT STORY.

In reviewing Percival's Account of Ceylon, Smith tell us the best history of the immense size and voracious appetite of a certain species of serpent—that one was killed near a British settlement in the East Indies, in whose body they found the chaplain of the garrison, all in black, the Rev. Mr. —— (somebody or other, whose name we have forgotten), and who, after having been missing for above a week, was discovered in this very inconvenient situation.

ARCHDEACON NARES.

In 1802, this alarmist Archdeacon published a Thanksgiving Sermon which Mr. Sydney Smith treated as it deserved, in the *Edinburgh Review*. The Archdeacon attacked the farmers, accusing them of cruelty and avarice; raised the old

outcry of monopoly; talked of subjecting their granaries to the control of an exciseman; and proposed to fine those in whose possession corn, beyond a certain quantity to be fixed by law, should be found. "This style of argument," says the Reviewer, "is pardonable enough in those who argue from the belly rather than the brains; but is to be reprehended in a well-fed and well-educated clergyman." The absurdity of attributing the high price of corn to combinations of farmers is then exposed; and we have next this powerful remedy:

"The poor are not to be supported, in time of famine, by abatement of price on the part of the farmer; but by the subscription of residentiary canons, archdeacons,* and all men rich in public or private property; and to those subscriptions the farmer should contribute according to the amount of his fortune. To insist that he should take a less price when he can obtain a greater, is to insist upon laying upon that order of men the whole burden of supporting the poor; a convenient system enough in the eyes of a rich ecclesiastic; and objectionable only because it is impracticable, pernicious, and unjust."

The close is very castigatory. After condemning the Archdeacon's reason as radically erroneous, it is added: "The most benevolent, the most Christian, and the most profitable conduct the farmer can pursue, is, to sell his commodities for the highest price he can possibly obtain. This advice, we think, is not in any danger of being rejected: we wish we were equally sure of success in counselling the Reverend Mr. Nares to attend in future, to practical rather than theoretical questions about provisions. He may be a very hospitable archdeacon; but nothing short of a *positive miracle* can make him an acute reasoner."

MADAME DE STAEL.

Our Edinburgh Reviewer did not spare the dismal trash of Madame de Stael's *Delphine*, which nearly dislocated the jaws of every critic among us with gaping, and so alarmed Bonaparte, that he seized the whole impression, and sent the authoress out of Paris. His opinion was that the book is calculated to shed a mild lustre over adultery; by gentle and

* Mr. Nares was Archdeacon of Stafford, and Canon Residentiary of Lichfield.

convenient gradations to destroy the modesty and the caution of women; to facilitate the acquisition of easy vices, and encumber the difficulty of virtue. What a wretched qualification of this censure to add, that the badness of the principles is alone corrected by the badness of the style, and that this celebrated lady (Madame de Stael,) would have been very guilty, if she had not been very dull!

BULLS AND WIT.

In the review of Edgworth on Irish Bulls, (which an unfortunate country gentleman recommended to his Agricultural Society,) we find the following distinction between bulls and wit: A Bull is an apparent congruity, and real incongruity, of ideas, suddenly discovered. If this account of Bulls be just, they are, (as might have been supposed), the very reverse of Wit; for, as Wit discovers real relations, that are not apparent, Bulls admit apparent relations that are not real. The pleasure arising from Wit proceeds from our surprise at suddenly discovering two things to be similar in which we suspected no similarity. The pleasure arising from Bulls, proceeds from our discovering two things to be dissimilar, in which a resemblance might have been suspected. The same doctrine will apply to Wit, and to Bulls in action. Practical Wit discovers connexion or relation between actions in which duller understandings discover none; and practical Bulls originate from an *apparent* relation between two actions, which more correct understandings perceive to have no relation at all.

ODD REMEDY.

In the Review of Winterbottom's *Account of Sierra Leone* we find an account of the method of clearing the land of those troublesome weeds called trees, by first cutting them down, and then setting fire to them. "At this season, the fires are seen rolling in every direction over the parched and inflammable herbage; and the blazing provinces are discerned at an immense distance in the night by ships approaching the coast. At this period, it is not safe to travel without a tinder-box; for if a traveller is surprised by the pursuit of the flame, his only safety consists in propagating the same evil before, by which he is menaced behind; and in *trudging on amidst the fiery hyphen*, multiplying destruction, in order to avoid it."

CURATES' SALARIES.

In the Curates' Salary Bill proposed to Parliament, in 1808, the Reviewer says, there is one glaring omission. "The Chancellor of the Exchequer has entirely neglected to make any provision for that very meritorious class of men, the *lay curates*, who do all the business of those offices, of which lazy and non-resident placemen receive the emoluments. So much delicacy and conscience, however, are here displayed on the subject of pocketing unearned emoluments, that we have no doubt the moral irritability of this servant of the Crown will speedily urge him to a species of reform of which he may be the object as well as the mover."

CRUELTIES OF THE RICH AND POOR.

In a paper on the Proceedings of the Society for the Suppression of Vice, the Reviewer is much disgusted with the control which the Society exercise over the amusements of the poor. Of cruelty to animals, let the reader take the following specimens:

Running an iron hook into the intestines of an animal; presenting this first animal to another as his food; and then pulling this second creature up and suspending him by the barb in his stomach.

Riding a horse till he drops, in order to see an innocent animal torn to pieces by dogs.

Keeping a poor animal upright for many weeks, to communicate a peculiar hardness to his flesh.

Making deep incisions into the flesh of another animal while living, in order to make the muscles more firm.

Immersing another animal, while living, in hot water.

Now, we do fairly admit that such abominable cruelties as these are worthy the interference of the law; and that the Society should have punished them, cannot be matter of surprise to any feeling mind.—But, stop, gentle reader! These cruelties are the cruelties of the Suppressing Committee, not of the poor. You must not think of punishing these.—The first of these cruelties passes under the pretty name of *angling*;—and therefore there can be no harm in it—the more particularly as the President himself has one of the best preserved trout streams in England.—The next is *hunting*;—and as many of the Vice-Presidents and of the Committee

hunt, it is not possible there can be any cruelty in hunting.—The next is a process for making *brawn*—a dish never tasted by the poor, and therefore not to be disturbed by indictment. —The fourth is the mode of *crimping* cod; and the fifth, of boiling lobsters; all high-life cruelties, with which the justice of the peace has no business to meddle. The real thing which calls forth the sympathies, and harrows up the soul, is to see a number of boisterous artisans baiting a bull, or a bear; not a savage hare, or a carnivorous stag, but a poor, innocent, timid bear;—not pursued by magistrates and deputy-lieutenants, men of education—but by those who must necessarily seek their relaxation in noise and tumultuous merriment—by men whose feelings are blunted, and whose understanding is wholly devoid of refinement.

The Society detail, with great complacency, their detection of a Bear-baiting in Black Boy-alley, Chick-lane, and the prosecution of the offenders before a magistrate. "It appears to us that nothing can be more partial and unjust than this kind of proceeding. A man of ten thousand a year may worry a fox as much as he pleases—may encourage the breed of a mischievous animal on purpose to worry it; and a poor labourer is carried before a magistrate for paying sixpence to see an exhibition of courage between a dog and a bear! Any exhibition may be practised to gorge the stomachs of the rich—none to enliven the holidays of the poor. We venerate those feelings which really protect creatures susceptible of pain, and incapable of complaint. But heaven-born pity, now-a-days, calls for the income-tax and the court-guide; and ascertains the rank and fortune of the tormentor before she weeps for the pain of the sufferer.

"It is astonishing how the natural feelings of mankind are distorted by false theories. Nothing can be more mischievous than to say, that the pain inflicted by the dog of a man of quality is not (when the strength of the two animals is the same) equal to that produced by the cur of a butcher. Haller, in his pathology, expressly says, that *the animal bitten knows no difference in the quality of the biting animal's master;* and it is now the universal opinion among all enlightened men, that the misery of the brawner would be very little diminished, if he could be made sensible that he was to be eaten up by persons of the first fashion. The contrary supposition seems to us to be absolute nonsense; it is the desertion of the true *Baconian* philosophy, and

the substitution of mere unsupported conjecture in its place."

"The trespass, however, which calls forth all the energies of a suppressor, is the sound of a fiddle. That the common people are really enjoying themselves is now beyond all doubt; and away rush Secretary, President, and Committee, to clap the cotillon into the Compter, and to bring back the life of the poor to its regular standard of decorous gloom. The gambling-houses of St. James's remain untouched. The peer ruins himself and his family with impunity; while the Irish labourer is privately whipped for not making a better use of the excellent moral and religious education which he has received in the days of his youth."

This, it should be added, was written half a century ago.

METHODISM.

Mr. Sydney Smith was a hearty hater of cant; and always entertained, to use his own words, "a passionate love for common justice and common sense." He entered with great spirit and success into the lists against "*Methodism*," which, in those days, was a strait-laced, morose, and repulsive system, that decried all pastimes, and proscribed all recreations, however innocent.

"The Methodists," he remarks, "hate pleasure and amusements; no theatre, no cards, no dancing, no punchinello, no dancing dogs, no blind fiddlers;—all the amusements of the rich and the poor must disappear wherever these gloomy people get a footing. It is not the abuse of pleasure which they attack, but the interspersion of pleasure, however much it is guarded by good sense and moderation;—it is not only wicked to hear the licentious plays of Congreve, but wicked to hear *Henry the Fifth*, or *The School for Scandal*;—it is not only dissipated to run about to all the parties in London and Edinburgh, but dancing *is not fit for a being who is preparing himself for eternity*. *Ennui*, wretchedness, melancholy, groans and sighs, are the offerings which these unhappy men make to a Deity who has covered the earth with gay colours, and scented it with rich perfumes; and shown us, by the plan and order of His works, that He has given to man something better than a bare existence, and scattered over His creation a thousand superfluous joys which are totally unnecessary to the mere support of life."

Smith's writings against Methodism—under which term he comprehended all pious vulgarity and offensive puritanical customs—roused a host of enemies, who assailed the unknown reviewer with unmeasured virulence. He defended himself with great animation, as follows:

"In spite of all misrepresentation, we have ever been, and ever shall be, the sincere friends of sober and rational Christianity. We are quite ready, if any fair opportunity occur, to defend it to the best of our ability from the tiger-spring of infidelity; and we are quite determined, if we can prevent such an evil, that it shall not be eaten up by the nasty and numerous vermin of Methodism." Again: "If the choice rested with us, we should say, give us back our wolves again—restore our Danish invaders—curse us with any evil but the evil of a canting, deluded methodistical populace."

A gentleman, who afterwards rendered himself somewhat notorious by preaching a sermon against Lord Byron (John Styles, D.D.), came forward to extinguish the assailant of Methodism. Unhappy man! *insignis flebit.* "It is not true," Sydney Smith replied, "it is not true, as this bad writer is perpetually saying, that the world hates piety. The modest and unobtrusive piety which fills the heart with all human charities, and makes a man gentle to others and severe to himself, is an object of universal love and veneration. But mankind hate the lust of power, when it is veiled under the garb of piety; they hate canting and hypocrisy; they hate advertisers and quacks in piety; they do not choose to be insulted; they love to tear folly and imprudence from the altar, which should only be a sanctuary for the wretched and the good."

This cutting reply to Dr. Styles appeared in the *Edinburgh Review*, in 1809.*

* The Rev. John Styles, D.D., originally of Cowes, in the Isle of Wight, was long a popular preacher at Brighton, in the chapel of Lady Huntingdon's connexion, in North-street. On his removal from Brighton, he built Holland Chapel, in the Brixton-road, for Independents. He was remarkable for his "flowery oratory," and he published a novel, many sermons, notes on the Bible, a vindication of Evangelical preaching, and a virulent attack upon the immoral and antichristian tendency of the Stage; besides the strictures on the two critiques in the *Edinburgh Review*, which brought him into the above conflict.

A WORD FOR THE CLIMBING BOYS.

Among the philanthropic objects to which Sydney Smith directed the powerful battery of his wit, humour, and acute reasoning, his standing up for the correction of the abuses in Chimney-sweeping is very remarkable. Some forty years ago, he wrote in the *Edinburgh Review* a paper to show the misery to which children were doomed in climbing our chimneys, and to show the humanity of superseding this necessity by the use of machinery. He sets out with describing the charms of a well-arranged dinner—a great triumph of civilization. The hour of dinner includes everything of sensual and intellectual gratification which a great nation glories in producing. "In the midst of all this, who knows that the kitchen-chimney caught fire half an hour before dinner! and that a poor little wretch, of six or seven years old, was sent up in the midst of flames to put it out?"

It should not be forgotten that, to do away with such cruelties as the above, a Society was formed "for superseding the Necessity of Climbing-boys," and an Account of its Proceedings is the peg upon which the Reviewer hangs his eloquent advocacy. Still, how many years did it take to wipe out this blot upon our high civilization! Charles Lamb satirized it in his kindly humour; James Montgomery pleaded for the poor children in the sweetest pathos of his verse; and "The Climbing Boy," and the inhumanities practised upon him, were brought upon the stage by Peake, as dramatist, aided by the broad fun of John Reeve as actor.

The more serious advocacy is to be found in the evidence taken upon the subject before the two Houses of Parliament, showing how boys were made chimney-sweepers at the early age of five or six—"Little boys for small flues" we all remember upon the cards left at our doors by itinerant chimney-sweepers. The cruelties practised in teaching the boys to climb—how they were often crippled—how they stuck fast in a chimney, and were cut out—how they slept upon soot for a bed—how they were subject to sore eyes and a peculiar sort of cancer—and often went out of the world in a most wretched manner—are detailed in the evidence quoted by the Reviewer.

"We now come," he says, "to burning little chimney-sweepers. A large party are invited to dinner—a great display is to be made; and about an hour before dinner, there

is an alarm that the kitchen-chimney is on fire! It is impossible to put off the distinguished personages who are expected. It gets very late for the soup and fish, the cook is frantic—all eyes are turned upon the sable consolation of the master chimney-sweeper—and up into the midst of the burning chimney is sent one of the miserable little infants of the brush! There is a positive prohibition of this practice, and an enactment of penalties in one of the Acts of Parliament which respect chimney-sweepers. But what matter acts of Parliament, when the pleasures of genteel people are concerned? Or what is a toasted child, compared to the agonies of the mistress of the house and a deranged dinner?"

Think of girls being employed in this wretched work—little girls, daughters of the chimney-sweeper who was employed to sweep the chimneys of Windsor Castle. What a scandal to the Comptroller of the Royal Household of forty years since!

Then the misery of boys stolen from their parents, or sold by them, half clothed, and exposed to severe cold. "And as chimneys must be swept very early, at four or five o'clock of a winter morning, the poor boys are shivering at the door, and attempting, by repeated ringings, to rouse the profligate footman; but the more they ring, the more the footman does not come."

In conclusion, the Reviewer does not spare those profligate persons who are always ready to fling an air of ridicule upon the labours of humanity, because they are desirous that what they have not virtue to do themselves, should appear to be foolish and romantic when done by others. . . . Nor must we pass over a set of marvellously weak gentlemen, who discover democracy and revolution in every effort to improve the condition of the lower orders, and to take off a little of the load of misery from those points where it presses the hardest. Such are the men into whose hearts Mrs. Fry has struck the deepest terror—who abhor Mr. Bentham and his penitentiary; Mr. Bennet and his hulks; Sir James Mackintosh and his bloodless assizes; Mr. Tooke and his sweeping machines—and every other human being who is great and good enough to sacrifice his quiet to his love for his fellow-creatures.

Still, the matter is argued in a very reasonable manner; the Reviewer acknowledging that it was quite right to throw out the bill for prohibiting the sweeping of chimneys by

boys, because *humanity is a modern invention;* and there are many chimneys in old houses which cannot possibly be swept in any other manner. "But the construction of chimneys should be attended to in some new building act; and the treatment of boys be watched over with the most severe jealousy of the law. Above all, those who have chimneys accessible to machinery, should encourage the use of machines, and not think it beneath their dignity to take a little trouble in order to do a great deal of good."

Think of this matter being made the subject of a paper in the *Edinburgh Review*, when literature was far more grandiose business than it is at the present day; and reviewers rarely descended from the stilts of criticism to look into the minor evils of society—too small for their notice. Happily, the teachers, leaders, or followers, of the world are wiser in these days; but it has taken years of endurance to convince certain persons that laws are not to be made for the protection of one half of the world, and the cruel neglect of the other.

FIRST PREFERMENT.

In 1806, when the Whigs came into power, Mr. Smith's Holland House friends obtained for him from Lord Chancellor Erskine, the rectory of Foston-le-Clay, in Yorkshire. On going to Bishopsthorpe, to be inducted, Archbishop Markham was much struck with the young clergyman, but evidently did not approve of the ease and brilliancy of his conversation at the dinner-table, which he considered rather too much for one of the inferior clergy before his diocesan.

There are two parishes named Foston, in Yorkshire: one in the North Riding, the other in the East Riding: the Rev. Sydney Smith's living was the latter, a discharged vicarage about six and a half miles from Great Driffield; it is valued in the King's Books at 15*l.* 8*s.* 6*d.*, but is now worth 500*l.* a year.

Mr. Smith went to thank the Chancellor for the appointment. "Oh," said Erskine, "don't thank me, Mr. Smith, I gave you the living because —— insisted on my doing so; and if she had desired me to give it to the devil, *he* must have had it."

Foston-le-Clay is literally well named, its soil being of the stiffest clay. There had not been a resident clergyman here for one hundred and fifty years; and the parsonage-house

consisted of a kitchen with a room over it. The venerable clerk was 81 years of age, and soon astonished the new rector by saying, that although "people as comes from London are such fools," he thought Mr. Smith no fool. He had to build a parsonage, turn farmer, as the living consisted of land and no tithe, without any farm-buildings. He left town with his family about the middle of 1809, and settled temporarily in the village of Heslington, about two miles from York.

Lady Holland details the round of his life—telling us how her father used to drive himself and her mother every Sunday, summer and winter, to Foston church; how he used to dig daily in the garden at Heslington, to prevent his getting too stout; how he read so rapidly as to get through a quarto volume in a single morning; how, having once duly thought over his subject, he wrote with uninterrupted fluency; and the morning's work being finished, he took his accustomed walk. His method was astonishing; for he used frequently to lay out his plans of study for the whole year. He was very fond of children, encouraged their inquisitiveness, and loved to instruct as well as amuse them, and was very careful in seeing that the books they read were properly selected. He appeared to compose his essays and sermons with as much ease as anyone else would write a letter: all this was done with his family around him, and to whom he would occasionally read what he had written, and watch the effect it had upon them.

REFORM OF PREACHING.

Mr. Sydney Smith was not allowed to enjoy his great popularity as a preacher in the metropolis undisturbed. Accordingly, in the first volume of the *Quarterly Review*, (May, 1809,) there appeared a very censorious critique of the two volumes of Sermons* which he had published a few years previously. First, the changes in preaching which he advocated are described as an attempt to create a new era of pulpit eloquence and to make our preachers "articulate with every limb, and talk from head to foot with a thousand voices." Under these impressions he remarks:

"A clergyman clings to his velvet cushion with either

* Two volumes of Sermons by the Rev. Sydney Smith, A.M., late Fellow of New College, Oxford, rector of Foston, near York, one of the evening preachers at the Foundling Hospital, and alternate morning preacher at Berkeley and Fitzroy Chapels.

hand, keeps his eye riveted upon his book, speaks of the ecstasies of joy and fear with a voice and a face which indicate neither, and pinions his body and soul into the same attitude of limb and thought. If, by mischance, his hand slip from its orthodox gripe of the velvet, he draws it back as from liquid brimstone, or the caustic iron of the law, and atones for the indecorum by fresh inflexibility, and more rigorous sameness."

Hence he triumphantly asks: "Why call in the aid of paralysis to piety?—Why this holoplexia on sacred occasions alone?—Is sin to be taken from men, as Eve was from Adam, by casting them into a deep slumber?—And from what possible perverseness of common sense are we all to look like field preachers in Zembla, holy lumps of ice, numbed into quiescence, and stagnation, and mumbling?"

However, the reviewer, having attacked Mr. Smith for the smart but unconnected thoughts which the Sermons contained, and the grace of that species of gesticulation with which they were delivered,—it is allowed that at the date of the Review there was nothing extravagant or offensive in the attitudes of the preacher.

His doctrine is then misrepresented as appearing to belong to the Socinian school. It does not belong to our plan to quote the arguments; but we shall merely state that in a sermon preached before his Grace the Archbishop of York, and the clergy of Malton, at the visitation, August, in the same year, Sydney Smith reviewed the reviewer; and refuted the *Quarterly* from the pulpit.

We gather from the Review how popular and attractive these Sermons must have proved: since we learn that the sermon on Toleration was first preached at Berkeley Chapel; troops of admirers followed to the Temple Church; and it was then given to the world, at the request of the preacher's auditories.

Of Socinianism, by the way, we find this note in his Conversations: "Some one," naming —— as not very orthodox, "accuses a man of being a Socinian, and it is all over with him; for the country gentlemen all think it has something to do with poaching."

Here we cannot help remarking how many fantasies of preaching have led the world by the eyes and ears within the half-century that has elapsed since this attack upon Mr. Sydney Smith was published.

SETTLED AT FOSTON.

Once a year it was Mr. Smith's hospitable practice to invite some of the farmers of his neighbourhood to dine with him; the ladies of his family being of the party. In this manner he gained information, and extended his influence among his neighbours. Meanwhile, he became acquainted with the business of the farm; he physicked the poor villagers as well as the cattle, and was so kind to animals as to be remembered by them; and he even set up "an universal scratcher," at which the animals might scratch their backbones, without breaking the gates and palings.

In this daily intercourse with the villagers and farming people, the new rector, doubtless, gathered useful information for the management of his own land; since, his former life having been passed in towns, he needed the experience of others for his guide.

Among the domestic contrivances described by Lady Holland is the burning, in tin lamps, the fat of the rectory farm sheep instead of candles. The cure of smoky chimneys and the improvement of fireplaces, were also special objects of his ingenuity. He introduced gardens for the poor, and for spade cultivation, by letting portions of the glebe to the villagers at low rents. This was one of the earliest experiments of the kind, and its success had a most beneficial effect upon the neighbourhood.

He was much alone; but the extracts given by Lady Holland from his diary show that his leisure was not idly passed. Of his self-improvement we find evidence in a letter in which he says: "Living a great deal alone (as I now do) will, I believe, correct me of my faults, for a man can do without his own approbation in much society, but he must make great exertions to gain it when he is alone; without it, I am convinced, solitude is not to be endured." The maxims and rules of life, unfinished sketches and fragments, and historical notes, which have been printed, all show the practical character of Mr. Sydney Smith's mind, and the benevolence which he ever showed in adding to the happiness and comfort of his fellow-creatures. Even in his satire, there lurked a kindly feeling, which made its lesson the more effectual as well as more palatable. Lord Macaulay said, Sydney Smith was the greatest master of ridicule that had appeared among

us since Swift; but how much finer are the humanities to be traced in the rector's life at Foston than are to be found in the flashes which lit up the vicarage of Laracor or the deanery of St. Patrick's.

Among his sports, Mr. Sydney Smith did not include shooting, against which he had set his face from his first coming into the country; and he gives these reasons for his determination: "first, because I found, on trying at Lord Grey's, that the birds seemed to consider the muzzle of my gun as their safest position; secondly, because I never could help shutting my eyes when I fired my gun, so was not likely to improve; and thirdly, because, if you shoot, the Squire and the poacher both consider you as their natural enemy, and I thought it more clerical to be at peace with both."

At length, the parsonage-house was rebuilt at Foston—"the ugliest in the country, but one of the most convenient." Mr. Smith and his family removed there in March, 1814, and great was their delight thereat. Their first visitors were Lord and Lady Carlisle, who came over from Castle Howard, in their "gold coach:" his Lordship drove over nearly every week to enjoy the Rector's anecdotic conversation, and endear himself alike to old and young. During the summer, Lord and Lady Holland, Mr. Rogers, Sir Humphry Davy, and Mr. Warburton were visitors at the new parsonage-house, or "Rectory Head," as it was called.

Still, at times, it was a solitary life at Foston. Writing to a friend, Mr. Smith says, "It is twenty to one against our being engaged, (when you come,) as we only dine out once in seven or eight years, and the septennial exertion was made last year." This dining out was sometimes a sorry business: for we read of Mr. Smith's going several miles to a dinner-party, where so bad was the *manêge* that the kitchen-maid threw away the soup, mistaking it for dirty water; and the venison, when served, was so high and offensive, that it had to follow the soup.

Foston-*in-the-Clay* gave rheumatism in abundance, to meet which the Rector had his *rheumatic armour*,—his legs in two narrow buckets,—his jack-boots; round the throat a hollow tin collar; over each shoulder a large tin thing like a shoulder of mutton; and on his head a hollow tin helmet;—all filled with hot water.

In short, the parsonage-house was a kind of dispensary; and up to the last it was Smith's custom "to dine with the

rich in London, and physic the poor in the country—passing from the sauces of Dives to the sores of Lazarus." He visited the sick and poor, and assiduously performed all his parochial duties. He was very anxious to improve the notions of country-people on domestic economy;—he was of opinion that they did not use the most nutritious diet that their means admitted; and he had a sort of "model pudding" exhibited in the kitchen at Foston.

Not to lose time, he farmed with a tremendous speaking-trumpet from his door; besides a telescope, slung in leather, for observing what they were doing.

He was, in his youth, very fond of the game of chess; he left it off for many years, but resumed it at Foston. His play was bold, rapid attack; he sat with a book in his hand, looked up for an instant, and made a move, and so beat his daughter (Lady Holland) regularly every night, all through the winter. He had promised her a shilling, if she beat him: at last, she won the shilling, but lost her playfellow; he challenged her no more.

He delighted in flowers; and Lady Holland tells us that he often went into the garden the moment he was dressed, and returned with his hands full of roses, to place them on the plates at breakfast. He liked to see the young people staying in his house dressed with natural flowers, and encouraged them to invent all sorts of flowery ornaments, such as earrings and necklaces.

Mrs. Marcet has preserved an odd incident which happened during one of her visits: Mr. Smith was sitting at breakfast in the library, when a poor woman came, begging him to christen a new-born infant, without loss of time, as she thought it was dying. Mr. Smith instantly quitted the breakfast-table for this purpose, and went off to her cottage. On his return, Mrs. Marcet inquired in what state he had left the poor babe. "Why," said he, "I first gave it a dose of castor-oil, and then I christened it; so now the poor child is ready for either world."

Sometimes, the visitors coming unexpectedly disconcerted the parsonage arrangements; as when Sir James Mackintosh and his daughter arrived late one winter night, when the carriage could not be got up to the door blockaded by snow. Next morning arrived Sir James's letter, announcing his intended visit, and asking whether Mr. and Mrs. Smith could receive him.

In forming the establishment at Foston-parsonage a man-servant was too expensive, so Mr. Smith caught up a little garden-girl, made like a mile-stone, christened her Bunch, put a napkin in her hand, and made her his butler. The girls taught her to read, Mrs. Sydney to wait, and Sydney undertook her morals: Bunch became the best butler in the county.

Mr. Smith made Bunch repeat daily the faults of which he had cured her;—"Plate-snatching, gravy-spilling, door-slamming, blue-bottle fly-catching, and curtsey-bobbing."—Blue-bottle fly-catching—standing with mouth open and not attending. Curtsey-bobbing—curtseying to the centre of the earth.

The little Dutch-like portrait of the country waiting-maid is most amusingly painted in Lady Holland's *Memoir*.

PETER PLYMLEY'S LETTERS.

Scarcely had Mr. Smith left London, and settled, with his family, for a time, in the village of Sunning, near Reading, to enjoy "the pure pleasures of the rural life," when there was published "*A Letter from Peter Plymley to his Brother Abraham*" *in the Country*, on the subject of the Catholics. We have had many celebrated "Letters," and "Warning Letters" published in our time; but none ever so took the town and country by storm as the Letters of Peter Plymley, or Peter Pith, as Lord Byron delighted to call the writer. These Letters were extended to ten: their sale was unprecedentedly rapid; they are reprinted in the collected works. Their authorship could not for some time be traced: the Government were perturbed; but their excellence soon pointed to the village where the writer was sojourning. The Catholics were overflowing with gratitude to the champion of their cause, and showed their lively appreciation of his talents by reprinting the Letters in the cheapest possible form, and for gratuitous circulation throughout Ireland,—a plan of agitation which had a tremendous effect. At home, encomium ran high: the irony of the Letters was declared second only to Pascal's; and a foreigner happily observed that the characteristic of the mind of the writer was a keen perception of the grotesque side of whatever was bad and unjust, and that his power lay in descrying the constant relation which subsists between falsehood and absurdity.

Let us hear what the writer himself says of these Letters, in the Preface to his Works, written in 1839. First, as to his thus taking up the cause of the Catholics. After congratulating himself upon the abolition of all our disqualifying laws for religious opinions, and saying that he sees nothing in such measures but unmixed good, and real increase of strength to our Establishment, he proceeds:

"The idea of danger from the extension of the Catholic religion in England I utterly deride. The Catholic faith is a misfortune to the world, but those whose faith it conscientiously is, are quite right in professing it boldly, and in promoting it by all means which the law allows. A physician does not say, 'You will be well as soon as the bile is got rid of;' but he says, 'You will not be well *until after* the bile is got rid of.' He knows, after the cause of the malady is removed, that morbid habits are to be changed, weakness to be supported, organs to be called back to their proper exercise, subordinate maladies to be watched, secondary and vicarious symptoms to be studied. The physician is a wise man—but the anserous politician insists, after 200 years of persecution, and ten of emancipation, that Catholic Ireland should be as quiet as Edmonton or Tooting.

"Not only are just laws wanted for Catholic Ireland, but the just administration of just laws; such as they have in general experienced under the Whig Government: and this system steadily persevered in will, after a lapse of time, and O'Connell quiet, conciliate and civilise that long-injured and irritable people."

The author then tells us that the Government of the day took great pains to find out the author of the Plymley Letters: "all that they *could* find was that they were brought to Mr. Budd, the publisher, by the Earl of Lauderdale. Somehow or another, it came to be conjectured that I was the author; I have always denied it; but finding that I deny it in vain, I have thought it might be as well to include the Letters in this collection: *they had an immense circulation at the time*, and I think above 20,000 copies were sold."

Although the grievances which these Letters were designed to remedy have passed away, their exquisite humour remains, as we shall show by a few passages. First, as to the Coronation Oath forbidding the concessions:

"What folly to talk to me of an oath, which, under all possible circumstances, is to prevent the relaxation of the Catholic laws! for such

a solemn appeal to God sets all conditions and contingencies at defiance. Suppose Bonaparte was to retrieve the only very great blunder he has made, and were to succeed, after repeated trials, in making an impression upon Ireland, do you think we should hear anything of the impediment of a coronation oath? or would the spirit of this country tolerate for an hour such ministers, and such unheard-of nonsense, if the most distant prospects existed of conciliating the Catholics by every species even of the most abject concessions? And yet, if your argument is good for anything, the coronation oath ought to reject, at such a moment, every tendency to conciliation, and to bind Ireland for ever to the crown of France."

He then asks Abraham whether he is aware that there were as many persons put to death for religious opinions under the mild Elizabeth as under the bloody Mary? The reign of the former was, to be sure, ten times as long; but he mentions this fact merely to show that *something depends upon the age in which men live*, as well as on their religious opinions.

We have always thought the words we have italicised to be grievously neglected by historical writers, and to have led to innumerable erroneous notions as to the relative condition of mankind in various ages.

"Three hundred years ago men burnt and strangled each other for these opinions. Time has softened Catholic as well as Protestant: they both required it; though each perceives only his own improvement, and is blind to that of the other." He then allows that Abraham is a kind-hearted man, but if he had lived in those times, he certainly would have roasted his Catholic. "You tell me," he adds, "I am a party man. I hope I shall always be so when I see my country in the hands of a pert London joker and a second-rate lawyer. Of the first no other good is known than that he makes pretty Latin verses; the second seems to me to have the head of a country parson, and the tongue of an Old Bailey lawyer."

His laugh at the absurd alarms about the Pope is in a livelier vein.

In the first place, my dear Abraham, the Pope is not landed, nor are there any curates sent out after him,—nor has he been hid at St. Alban's by the dowager Lady Spencer,—nor dined privately at Holland House,—nor been seen near Dropmore, &c., &c. By this time, the best informed clergy in the metropolis are convinced that the rumour is without foundation; and though the Pope is probably hovering about our coast in a fishing-smack, it is most likely he will fall a prey to the vigilance of our cruisers; and it is certain he has not yet polluted the Protestants of our soil.

Exactly in the same manner, the story of the wooden gods seized at Charing-cross, by an order from the Foreign Office, turns out to be without the shadow of a foundation. Instead of the angels and archangels mentioned by the informer, nothing was discovered but a wooden image of Lord Mulgrave, going down to Chatham, as a head-piece for the *Spanker* gun-vessel: it was an exact resemblance of his Lordship

in his military uniform; and therefore, as little like a god as can well be imagined.

The horrors that would follow an invasion of England are thus described:

You cannot imagine, you say, that England will ever be ruined and conquered; and for no other reason that I could find, but because it seems so very odd it should be ruined and conquered. Alas! so reasoned in their time, the Austrian, Russian, and Prussian Plymleys. But the English are brave: so were all these nations. You might get together an hundred thousand men individually brave; but, without generals capable of commanding such a machine, it would be as useless as a first-rate man-of-war manned by Oxford clergymen or Parisian shopkeepers. I do not say this to the disparagement of English officers—they have had no means of acquiring experience; but I do say it to create alarm: for we do not appear to me to be half alarmed enough, or to entertain that sense of our danger which leads to the most obvious means of self-defence. As for the spirit of the peasantry in making a gallant defence behind hedge-rows and through plate-racks and hencoops, highly as I think of their bravery, I do not know any nation in Europe so likely to be struck with panic as the English; and this from their total unacquaintance with the science of war. Old wheat and beans blazing for twenty miles round,—cart-mares shot,—sows, of Lord Somerville's breed, running wild over the country,—the minister of the parish wounded sorely in his hinder parts,—Mrs. Plymley in fits;—all these scenes of war an Austrian or a Russian has seen three or four times over; but it is now three centuries since an English pig has fallen in a fair battle upon English ground, or a farm-house been rifled, or a clergyman's wife been subjected to any other proposals of love than the connubial endearments of her sleek and orthodox mate. The old edition of Plutarch's Lives, which lies in the corner of your parlour-window, has contributed to work you up to the most romantic expectations of our Roman behaviour. You are persuaded that Lord Amherst will defend Kew-bridge like Cocles; that some maid of honour will break away from her captivity, and swim over the Thames; that the Duke of York will burn his capitulating hand: and little Mr. Sturges Bourne give forty years' purchase for Moulsham-hall, while the French are encamped upon it. * * * * But, whatever was our conduct, if every ploughman was as great a hero as he who was called from his oxen to save Rome from her enemies, I should still say, that at such a crisis you want the affections of all your subjects in both islands; there is no spirit which you must alienate, no heart you must avert; every man must feel he has a country, and that there is an urgent and pressing cause why he should expose himself to death.

In his historical sketch of Presbyterianism, how facetiously he returns to his old friends, the Scotch:

If the great mass of the people, environed as they are on every side with Jenkinsons, Percevals, Melvilles, and other perils, were to pray for divine illumination and aid, what more could Providence, in its mercy, do than send them the example of Scotland? For what a length of years was it attempted to compel the Scotch to change their religion:

horse, foot, artillery, and armed prebendaries, were sent out after the Presbyterian parsons and their congregations. The Percevals of those days called for blood. This call is never made in vain, and blood was shed; but, to the astonishment and horror of the Percevals of those days, they could not introduce the Book of Common Prayer, nor prevent that metaphysical people from going to heaven their true way, instead of our true way. With a little oatmeal for food, and a little sulphur for friction—allaying cutaneous irritation with the one hand, and holding his Calvinistical creed in the other—Sawney ran away to his flinty hills, sung his psalm out of tune his own way, and listened to his sermon of two hours long, amid the rough and imposing melancholy of the tallest thistles. But Sawney brought up his unbreeched offspring in a cordial hatred of his oppressors; and Scotland was as much a part of the weakness of England then, as Ireland is at this moment. The true and the only remedy was applied: the Scotch were suffered to worship God after their own tiresome manner, without pain, penalty, and privation. No lightnings descended from heaven; the country was not ruined; the world is not yet come to an end; the dignitaries who foretold all these consequences are utterly forgotten.

Exquisite is this exposure of the injustice of religious persecution:

I admit there is a vast luxury in selecting a particular set of Christians, and in worrying them as a boy worries a puppy-dog: it is an amusement in which all the young English are brought up from their earliest days. I like the idea of worrying men who use a different hassock from me, that till they change their hassock, they shall never be colonels, aldermen, or parliament-men. While I am gratifying my personal insolence respecting religious forms, I fondle myself into an idea that I am religious, and that I am doing my duty in the most exemplary (as I certainly am in the most easy) way. But, then, my good Abraham, this sport, admirable as it is, is become, with respect to the Catholics, a little dangerous; and if we are not extremely careful in taking the amusement, we shall tumble into the holy water and be drowned. As it seems necessary to your idea of an established church to have somebody to worry and to torment, suppose we were to select for this purpose William Wilberforce, Esq., and the patent Christians of Clapham. We shall by this expedient enjoy the same opportunity for cruelty and injustice, without being exposed to the same risks. We will compel them to abjure vital clergymen by a public test; to deny that the said William Wilberforce has any power of working miracles, touching for barrenness, or any other infirmity; or that he is endowed with any preternatural gift whatever. We will swear them to the doctrine of good works,—compel them to preach common sense, and to hear it,—to frequent bishops, deans, and other high churchmen,—and to appear (once in the quarter, at the least) at some melodrame, opera, pantomime, or other light scenical representation: in short, we will gratify the love of insolence and power; we will enjoy the old orthodox sport of witnessing the impotent anger of men compelled to submit to civil degradation, or to sacrifice their notions of truth to ours. And all this we may do without the slightest risk, because their numbers are, as yet not very considerable. Cruelty and injustice must, of course, exist; but why connect them with danger? Why torture a bull-dog,

when you can get a frog or a rabbit? I am sure my proposal will meet with the most universal approbation.

In this lively vein, he proposes to *exclude men with red hair* from Parliament:

I have often thought, if the *wisdom of our ancestors* had excluded all persons with red hair from the House of Commons, of the throes and convulsions it would occasion to restore them to their natural rights! What mobs and riots would it produce! To what infinite abuse and obloquy would the capillary patriot be exposed! what wormwood would distil from Mr. Perceval! what froth would drop from Mr. Canning! how (I will not say *my*, but *our* Lord Hawkesbury, for he belongs to us all,) how our Lord Hawkesbury would work away about the hair of King William, and Lord Somers, and the authors of the great and glorious revolution! how Lord Eldon would appeal to the Deity, and his own virtues, and to the hair of his children! Some would say that red-haired men were superstitious; some would prove they were Atheists; they would be petitioned against, as the friends of slavery and the advocates for revolt: in short, such a corrupter of the heart and the understanding is the spirit of persecution, that these unfortunate people (conspired against by their fellow-subjects of every complexion), if they did not emigrate to countries where hair of another colour was persecuted, would be driven to the falsehood of perukes, or the hypocrisy of the Tricosian fluid.

YORK ASSIZES' SERMONS.

A visit to York, during the assizes, occasionally relieved the Foston routine; and there Mr. Smith met some of his early friends, as Mr. Scarlett and Mr. Brougham, and on one occasion, Lord Lyndhurst, then Sir John Copley. This was during the trial of Mr. Henry Hunt, the Radical. Mr. Smith was present, and, Lady Holland tells us, expressed "how much he was struck by the natural and untaught ability which Hunt evinced in the conduct and defence of his cause." *

At the York assizes, 1824, Mr. Sydney Smith, who had been appointed chaplain to the High Sheriff, preached in the

* We are not surprised at this impression; for Hunt possessed a larger share of common sense than most people gave him credit for; of this his conduct in Parliament was evidence. His name got the prefix of "Orator," (and a good plain orator he was,) and this sobriquet, and his strange political bed-fellows, led to his being generally underrated. He had this rare quality in a man of his vocation—deference to the opinions of others. His Memoirs, which he is said to have written during his imprisonment in Ilchester jail, were revised, and we believe, greatly improved by the hand of his old friend, Mr. R. A. Davenport, editor of Whittingham's hundred volume edition of the British Poets.

Cathedral two sermons—upon the unjust judge, and the lawyer who tempted Christ. Startling was the effect when the preacher rose in the pulpit, (the two judges sitting opposite to him,) and gave out this text: "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall; for sittest thou to judge me according to the law, and commandest me to be smitten, contrary to the law?" The idle curiosity was not gratified; for the sermon proved to be a very eloquent exposition of the duties and responsibilities of the legal profession, and a masterly eulogium on the office of an English judge.

ARMS FOUND.

In 1826, Mr. Sydney Smith paid a visit to Paris. The only purchase he made for himself there, though he brought all his family a gift, was a huge seal, containing the arms of a peer of France, which he bought at a broker's for four francs; and, in sly satire, he declared these bearings should henceforth be the arms of his branch of the Smith family!

Lady Holland tells us, that from all her father "witnessed in Paris, and seeing the little wisdom the Bourbons seemed to have gained from misfortune, he predicted the Revolution which took place so few years afterwards."

CANON OF BRISTOL.

In 1828, Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst, from the respect he had for Mr. Smith's character and talents, though diametrically opposed to him in politics, bestowed on him a stall then vacant at Bristol. This was the promotion he so much desired, since it gave him rank in his profession, in which his opinions had kept him down. His sermon on religious toleration was a novelty in Bristol Cathedral; and he told a friend, in a letter, that he gave the Mayor and Corporation (the most Protestant in England) such a dose of toleration as should last them for many a year. The Cathedral was crowded, as it was thenceforth whenever he preached. His first sermon ended with the beautiful apologue from Jeremy Taylor, illustrating charity and toleration, where Abraham, rising in wrath, put the wayfaring man forth from his tent for refusing to worship the Lord his God, the voice of the Lord was heard in the tent, saying, "Abraham! Abraham! have I borne with this man for threescore years and ten, and canst not thou bear with him for one hour?"

The new Canon was presented at Court, and wore at the levee shoe-strings instead of shoe-buckles. The company looked at his feet, while he thought they were admiring his legs. However, he learnt the truth, by a wag laughing at the mistake, and thinking he had done it as a good joke. He was much annoyed, and kept his feet as coyly under his petticoats as the veriest prude in the country.

He writes to Lady Holland: "The colleagues I have here are a Mr. Ridley, cousin to Sir Matthew; a very good-natured, agreeable man—deaf, tottering, worldly-minded, vain as a lawyer, noisy, and perfectly good-natured and obliging. The little Dean I have not seen; he is as small as the Bishop, they say. It is supposed that the one of these ecclesiastics elevated upon the shoulders of the other, would fall short of the Archbishop of Canterbury's wig. The Archbishop of York is forced to go down on his knees to converse with the Bishop of Bristol, just as an elephant kneels to receive its rider."

AN ANGRY BISHOP.

Mr. Smith's promotion to the canonry drew upon him the ire of Bishop Monk (Gloucester), who said that he had not been appointed to his situation as Canon of St. Paul's for his piety and learning, but because he was a scoffer and a jester. "Is not this rather strong," says Smith, "for a Bishop, and does it not appear as rather too close an imitation of that language which is used in the apostolic occupation of trafficking in fish? Whether I have been appointed for my piety or not, must depend upon what this poor man means by piety. He means by that word, of course, a defence of all the tyrannical and oppressive abuses of the Church, which have been swept away within the last fifteen or twenty years of my life: the Corporation and Test Acts; the Penal Laws against Catholics; the Compulsory Marriages of Dissenters; and all those disabling and disqualifying laws which were the disgrace of our Church, but which he has always looked up to as the consummation of human wisdom. If piety consisted in the defence of these—if it was infamous to struggle for their abrogation, I have indeed led an ungodly life . . . After all, I believe Bishop Monk has been the cause of much more laughter than ever I have been; I cannot account for it, but I never see him enter a room without exciting a smile on every countenance within it."

Then with what exquisite humour he quizzes the poor prelate: "I understand," he says, "that the Bishop bursts into tears every now and then, and says that I have set him the name of Simon, and that all the Bishops now call him Simon. Simon of Gloucester, after all, is a real writer, and how could I know that Dr. Monk's name was Simon? When tutor in Lord Carrington's family, he was called by the endearing though somewhat unmajestic name of *Dick;* and if I had thought about his name at all, I should have called him Richard of Gloucester."—*Third Letter to Archdeacon Singleton.*

REMOVAL TO COMBE FLOREY.

In 1829, through the kindness of Lord Lyndhurst, Mr. Smith was enabled to exchange Foston for the living of Combe Florey, near Taunton, in a much more beautiful country; the house larger, a wood of three or four acres, and a fertile glebe of sixty acres. Still, the parsonage-house had to be repaired, and this at the expense of 2,000*l.*

A COMPENSATION PARALLEL.

In a strong speech at the Taunton Reform Meeting, Mr. Smith thus illustrated the principle of compensation which it was proposed to adopt towards those who, by the new measure, would lose their chance of pillaging the public:

"When I was a young man, the place in England I remember as most notorious for highwaymen and their exploits was Finchley Common, near the metropolis; but Finchley Common, gentlemen, in the progress of improvement, came to be inclosed, and the highwaymen lost by these means the opportunity of exercising their gallant avocation. I remember a friend of mine proposed to draw up for them a petition to the House of Commons for compensation, which ran in this manner:—

"'We, your loyal highwaymen of Finchley Common and its neighbourhood, having, at great expense, laid in a stock of blunderbusses, pistols, and other instruments for plundering the public, and finding ourselves impeded in the exercise of our calling by the said inclosure of the said Common of Finchley, humbly petition your Honourable House will be pleased to assign to us such compensation as your Honourable

House in its wisdom and justice may think fit!'—Gentlemen, I must leave the application to you."

CANON OF ST. PAUL'S.

One of the first things Lord Grey said, on entering Downing-street, to a relation who was with him, was, "Now I shall be able to do something for Sydney Smith;" and shortly after he was appointed by the Premier to a Prebendal stall at St. Paul's in exchange for the one he held at Bristol.

Mr. Cockerell, the architect, and Superintendent of St. Paul's Cathedral, in a very interesting letter, printed in Lady Holland's *Memoir*, describes the *Gesta* of the Canon Residentiary: how his early communications with himself (Mr. C.) and all the officers of the Chapter, were extremely unpleasant; but when the Canon had investigated the matters, and there had been "a little collision," nothing could be more candid and kind than his subsequent treatment. He examined the prices of all the materials used in the repairs of the cathedral—as Portland-stone, putty, and white-lead: every item was taxed, payments were examined, and nothing new could be undertaken without his survey and personal superintendence. He surveyed the pinnacles and heights of the sacred edifice; and once, when it was feared he might stick fast in a narrow opening of the western towers, he declared that "if there were six inches of space, there would be room enough for him." The insurance of the magnificent cathedral engaged his early attention: Mr. Cockerell tells us: "St. Paul's was speedily and effectually insured in some of the most substantial offices in London: not satisfied with this security, he advised the introduction of the mains of the New River into the lower parts of the fabric, and cisterns and movable engines in the roof; and quite justifiable was his joke, that "he would reproduce the Deluge in our cathedral."

He had also the library heated by a stove, so as to be more comfortable to the studious; and the bindings of the books were repaired. Wren's noble model, we regret to learn, is "a ruin, after one hundred and forty years of neglect;" the funds being insufficient for its repair. Lastly, Mr. Smith materially assisted the progress of a suit in Chancery, by the successful result of which considerable addition was made to the fabric fund.

It is very gratifying to read these circumstantial records of

the practical qualities of Mr. Sydney Smith, as applied to the preservation of our magnificent metropolitan cathedral.

Before we leave St. Paul's we may record an odd story of Lady B—— calling the vergers, virgins. "She asked Mr. Smith one day if it was true that he walked down St. Paul's with three virgins holding silver pokers before him. He shook his head, and looked very grave; and bade her come and see. 'Some enemy of the Church,' he said, 'some Dissenter, had clearly been misleading her.'"

SHARE OF PREFERMENT.

In his First Letter to Archdeacon Singleton, he says: "If I am well provided for now, I have had my full share of the blanks in the lottery as well as the prizes. Till thirty years of age, I never received a farthing from the Church; then 50*l.* per annum for two years, then nothing for ten years, then 500*l.* per annum, increased for two or three years to 800*l.*, till in my grand climacteric, I was made Canon of St. Paul's; and before that period, I had built a parsonage-house, with farm-offices for a large farm, which cost me 4,000*l.*, and had reclaimed another from ruins at the expense of 2,000*l.* A lawyer or a physician, in good practice, would smile at this picture of great ecclesiastical wealth; and yet I am considered as a perfect monster of ecclesiastical prosperity."

MRS. PARTINGTON AND HER MOP.

This "labour in vain" will be found in Mr. Sydney Smith's speech at Taunton on the Lords' rejection of the Reform Bill, October, 1831, in the following passage:

"The attempt of the Lords to stop the progress of reform reminds me very forcibly of the great storm off Sidmouth, and of the conduct of the excellent Mrs. Partington on that occasion. In the winter of 1824, there set in a great flood upon that town; the tide rose to an incredible height, the waves rushed in upon the houses, and everything was threatened with destruction. In the midst of this sublime and terrible storm, Dame Partington, who lived upon the beach, was seen at the door of her house with mop and pattens, trundling her mop, squeezing out the sea-water, and vigorously pushing away the Atlantic Ocean. The Atlantic was roused; Mrs. Partington's spirit was up; but I need not

tell you that the contest was unequal. The Atlantic beat Mrs. Partington. She was excellent at a slop or a puddle; but she should not have meddled with a tempest. Gentlemen, be at your ease, be quiet and steady, you will beat Mrs. Partington."

The Americans, however, lay claim to the first use of the Partington and Mop image; and Mrs. P. has latterly become a very popular personage in the States.

THE BOROUGH SYSTEM.

In one of his speeches on the Reform Bill, Mr. Sydney Smith said: "All over England, you will find great scholars rotting in curacies—brave captains starving in garrets—profound lawyers decaying and mouldering in the Inns of Court, because the parsons, warriors, and advocates of Borough-mongers must be crammed to saturation, before there is a morsel of bread for the man who does not sell his vote, and put his country up to auction; and though this is of every-day occurrence, the Borough system, we are told, is no practical evil."

The opening of this speech is very strong: "Stick to the Bill—it is your Magna Charta, and your Runnymede. King John made a present to the Barons. King William has made a similar present to you. Never mind: common qualities good in common times. If a man does not vote for the Bill, he is unclean—the plague-spot is upon him—push him into the lazaretto of the last century, with Wetherell and Sadler—purify the air before you approach him—bathe your hands in chloride of lime, if you have been contaminated by his touch."

VISCOUNT MELBOURNE.

When Lord Melbourne declared himself quite satisfied with the Church as it is, but if the public had any desire to alter it, they might do as they pleased,—it drew upon him this reproval from Mr. Smith, of his habitual carelessness and contempt of duty:

". . . If the truth must be told, our Viscount is something of an impostor. Everything about him seems to betoken careless desolation: any one would suppose from his manner that he was playing at chuck-farthing with human happiness; that he was always on the heel of pastime; that

he would giggle away the Great Charter, and decide by the method of teetotum whether my Lords the Bishops should or should not retain their seats in the House of Lords. All this is the mere vanity of surprising and making us believe that he can play with kingdoms as other men can with ninepins. Instead of this lofty nebulo, this miracle of moral and intellectual felicities, he is nothing more than a sensible honest man, who means to do his duty to the Sovereign and to the country: instead of being the ignorant man he pretends to be, before he meets the deputation of Tallow Chandlers in the morning, he sits up half the night talking with Thomas Young about melting and skimming, and then, though he has acquired knowledge enough to work off a whole vat of prime Leicester tallow, he pretends next morning not to know the difference between a dip and a mould. In the same way, when he has been employed in reading Acts of Parliament, he would persuade us that he has been reading *Cleghorn on the Beatitudes*, or *Bickler on the Nine Difficult Points*. Neither can I allow to this Minister, (however he may be irritated by the denial,) the extreme merit of indifference to the consequences of his measures. I believe him to be conscientiously alive to the good or evil that he is doing, and that his caution has more than once arrested the gigantic projects of the Lycurgus of the Lower House. I am sorry to hurt any man's feelings, and to brush away the magnificent fabric of levity and gaiety he has reared; but I accuse our Minister of honesty and diligence: I deny that he is careless or rash: he is nothing more than a man of good understanding, and good principle, disguised in the eternal and somewhat wearisome affectation of a political roué."

LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

We dare say that it has often occurred to many a reader that Lord John Russell has been treated somewhat sneeringly by Mr. Smith. Such readers will be glad to find that his Lordship's name is only mentioned so often, (for instance, in the Second Letter to Archdeacon Singleton,) because the management of the Church matters devolved upon Lord John under the Melbourne Administration. "He is," says Mr. Smith, "beyond all comparison, the ablest man in the whole Administration, and to such a degree is he superior, that the Government could not exist for a moment without

him. If the Foreign Secretary were to retire, we should no longer be nibbling ourselves into disgrace on the coast of Spain. If the amiable Lord Glenelg were to leave us, we should feel secure in our colonial possessions. If Mr. Spring Rice were to go into holy orders, great would be the joy of the three per cents. A decent, good-looking head of the Government might easily enough be found in lieu of Viscount Melbourne; but in five minutes after the departure of Lord John, the whole Whig Government would be dissolved into sparks of liberality and splinters of Reform."

In his Letter to Lord John Russell on certain Church Reforms, Mr. Smith says: "You will, of course, consider me as a defender of abuses. I have all my life been just the contrary, and I remember, with pleasure, thirty years ago, old Lord Stowell saying to me, 'Mr. Smith, you would have been a much richer man if you had joined us.' I like, my dear Lord, the road you are travelling, but I don't like the pace you are driving; too similar to that of the son of Nimshi. I always feel myself inclined to cry out, Gently John, gently downhill. Put on the drag. We shall be over if you go so quick—you'll do us a mischief."

He tells us that when Lord John Russell went to Exeter, the people along the road were very much disappointed at his smallness. Smith told them he was much bigger before the Bill was thrown out, but was reduced by excessive anxiety about the people: this brought tears into their eyes.

INJUSTICE TO THE IRISH CATHOLICS.

"There seems to me," says Mr. Sydney Smith, in his Letter to the Electors, "a sort of injustice and impropriety in our deciding at all upon the Catholic Question. It should be left to those Irish Protestants whose shutters are bullet-proof; whose dinner-table is regularly spread with knife, fork, and cocked pistol, salt-cellar and powder-flask. Let the opinion of those persons be reverted to, who sleep in sheet-iron night-caps; who have fought so often and so nobly before their scullery-door, and defended the parlour passage as bravely as Leonidas defended the pass of Thermopylæ. The Irish Protestant members see and know the state of their own country. Let their votes decide the case. (A great majority of Irish members voted for Catholic Emancipation.) We are quiet and at peace: our homes may be defended with a feather and

our doors fastened with a pin; and, as ignorant of what armed and insulted Popery is, as we are of the state of New Zealand, we pretend to regulate by our clamours the religious factions of Ireland."

CHURCH REFORM.

Mr. Sydney Smith, in his first letter to Archdeacon Singleton, says: "We are told, if you agitate these questions among yourselves, you will have the democratic Philistines come down upon you, and sweep you all away together. Be it so; I am quite ready to be swept away when the time comes. Everybody has their favourite death: some delight in apoplexy, and others prefer marasmus (atrophy). I would infinitely rather be crushed by democrats, than, under the plea of the public good, be mildly and blandly absorbed by the Bishops."

Talking of a paragraph which lately (1833) stated that all the Church dignitaries meant to resign in case the threatened Church Reform was brought forward, Sydney Smith went off at score on the sad state we should be reduced to by such a resignation; our being obliged to send to America to borrow a bishop: "Have you such a thing as a bishop you could lend us? Shall keep him only a fortnight, and return him with new cassock, &c."

THE CATHEDRAL LETTERS.*

The main object of these celebrated Letters, was to oppose the Church Commission, and resist the attempts to extinguish the prebends attached to the cathedrals.

"Now, remember," says the writer, "I hate to overstate any case. I do not say that the destruction of cathedrals will put an end to railroads: I believe that good mustard and cress, sown after Lord John's Bill is passed, will, if duly watered, continue to grow. I do not say that the country has no *right*, after the death of individual incumbents, to do what they propose to do;—I merely say that it is inexpedient, uncalled for, and mischievous—that the lower clergy, for whose sake it is proposed to be done, do not desire it—that the Bishop Commissioners, who proposed it, would be heartily glad if it was put an end to—that it will lower the character of those who enter into the Church, and accustom the English people

* See the Collected Works, vol. iii.

to large and dangerous confiscations; I would not have gentlemen of the money-bags, and of wheat and bean-land, forget that the word Church means many other things than Thirty-nine Articles, and a discourse of five-and-twenty minutes' duration on the Sabbath. It means a check to the conceited rashness of experimental reasoners—an adhesion to old moral landmarks—an attachment to the happiness we have gained from tried institutions greater than the expectation of that which is promised by novelty and change. The loud cry of ten thousand teachers of justice and worship, that cry which masters the *Borgias* and *Catilines* of the world, and guards from devastation the best works of God—

'Magnâ testantur voce per orbem,
Discite justitiam moniti, et non temnere divos.'"

He turns the tables on the Episcopal Reformers:—"The Bishops and Commissioners wanted a fund to endow small Livings; they did not touch a farthing of their own incomes, only distributed them a little more equally; and proceeded lustily at once to confiscate Cathedral property. But why was it necessary, if the fund for small Livings was such a paramount consideration, that the future Archbishops of Canterbury should be left with two palaces, and 15,000*l.* per annum? Why is every future Bishop of London to have a palace in Fulham, a house in St. James's-square, and ten thousand pounds a year? Could not all the Episcopal functions be carried on well and effectually with the half of these incomes? Is it necessary that the Archbishop of Canterbury should give feasts to Aristocratic London; and that the domestics of the Prelacy should stand with swords and bag-wigs round pig, and turkey, and venison, to defend, as it were, the Orthodox gastronome from the fierce Unitarian, the fell Baptist, and all the famished children of Dissent?"

Here is a picture in his best style:—"Frequently did Lord John meet the destroying Bishops: much did he commend their daily heap of ruins; sweetly did they smile on each other, and much charming talk was there on meteorology and catarrh, and the particular Cathedral they were pulling down at each period;* till one fine day the Home Secretary, with a voice more bland, and a look more ardently affectionate, than that which the masculine mouse bestows on his nibbling female, informed them that the Government meant to take all

* "What Cathedral are we pulling down to-day?" was the standing question at the Commission.

the Church property into their own hands, to pay the rates out of it, and deliver the residue to the rightful possessors. Such an effect, they say, was never before produced by a *coup de théâtre*. The Commission was separated in an instant: London clenched his fist; Canterbury was hurried out by his Chaplains, and put into a warm bed; a solemn vacancy spread itself over the face of Gloucester; Lincoln was taken out in strong hysterics. What a noble scene Serjeant Talfourd would have made of this? Why are such talents wasted on *Ion* and the *Athenian Captive?*"

Again: "There is some safety in dignity. A Church is in danger when it is degraded. It costs mankind much less to destroy it when an institution is associated with mean, and not with elevated ideas. I should like to see the subject in the hands of 'H. B.' I would entitle the print, 'The Bishop's Saturday Night; or, Lord John Russell at the Pay-table!'

"The Bishops should be standing before the pay-table, and receiving their weekly allowance; Lord John and Spring Rice counting, ringing, and biting the sovereigns, and the Bishop of Exeter insisting that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given him one which was not weight. Viscount Melbourne, in high chuckle, would be standing, with his hat on, and his back to the fire, delighted with the contest; and the Deans and Canons should be in the background, waiting till their turn came and the Bishops were paid; and among them a Canon of large composition, urging them not to give away too much to the Bench. Perhaps I should add the President of the Board of Trade, recommending the truck-principle to the Bishops, and offering to pay them in hassocks, cassocks, aprons, shovel-hats, sermon-cases, and such-like ecclesiastical gear.

"Lord John Russell gives himself great credit for not having confiscated Church property, but merely remodelled and divided it. I accuse that excellent man not of plunder, but I accuse him of taking the Church of England, rolling it about as a cook does a piece of dough with a rolling-pin, cutting a hundred different shapes with all the plastic fertility of a confectioner, and without the most distant suspicion that he can ever be wrong, or ever be mistaken; with a certainty that he can anticipate the consequences of every possible change in human affairs. There is not a more honest nor a better man in England than Lord John Russell; but his worst failure is, that he is utterly ignorant of all moral fear:

there is nothing he would not undertake. I believe he would perform the operation for the stone, build St. Peter's, or assume (with or without ten minutes' notice) the command of the Channel Fleet; and no one would discover by his manner that the patient had died, the Church tumbled down, and the Channel Fleet been knocked to atoms."

RECIPE FOR A WINTER SALAD.

The witty Canon has left these amusing instructions:—

Two large potatoes, passed through kitchen sieve,
Unwonted softness to the salad give,
Of mordent mustard add a single spoon;
Distrust the condiment which bites so soon;
But deem it not, thou man of herbs, a fault
To add a double quantity of salt;
Three times the spoon with oil of Lucca crown,
And once with vinegar, procured from town.
True flavour needs it, and your poet begs
The pounded yellow of two well-boiled eggs.
Let onion atoms lurk within the bowl,
And, scarce suspected, animate the whole;
And, lastly, on the flavoured compound toss
A magic teaspoon of anchovy sauce.
Then, though green turtle fail, though venison's tough,
And ham and turkey are not boiled enough,
Serenely full the Epicure may say,—
Fate cannot harm me—I have dined to-day!

By the way, Sheridan, who is generally thought to have been too careless to attend to small domestic comforts, was a rare treasure in adding to the enjoyments of a country-house, or a picnic party. He was a capital hand at *improvising* dishes; and he particularly excelled in making an Irish stew.

LORD BROUGHAM'S CHANCERY REFORM.

Mr. Sydney Smith, in his speech on the Reform Bill, thus describes the new Chancellor's zeal: "Look at the gigantic Brougham, sworn in at twelve, and before six o'clock has a Bill on the table abolishing the abuses of a court which had been the curse of England for centuries.* For twenty-five long years did Lord Eldon sit in the court, surrounded with misery and sorrow, which he never held up a finger to alleviate. The widow and the orphan cried to him vainly as the

* In the Collected Works, this passage has this judicious note:—"Lord Lyndhurst is an exception; I firmly believe he had no wish to perpetuate the abuses of the Court of Chancery."

town-crier cries when he offers a small reward for a full purse; the bankrupt of the court became a lunatic of the court; estates mouldered away and mansions fell down, but the fees came in, and all was well; but in an instant the iron name of Brougham shivered to atoms this house of fraud and delay."

THE GAME-LAWS, SPRING-GUNS, AND MAN-TRAPS.

While in Yorkshire, Mr. Sydney Smith was engaged in an unceasing conflict with the Game-laws, Spring-guns, and Man-traps, and the system of punishing untried prisoners. Speaking of the man-traps, he exclaims: "There is a sort of horror in thinking of a whole land filled with lurking engines of death—machinations against human life under every green tree—traps and guns in every dusky dell and bosky bourn—the *feræ naturâ*, the lords of manors eyeing their peasantry as so many butts and marks, and panting to hear the click of the trap and to see the flash of the gun."

What admirable good sense and wit there is in the following passage on these strong laws: "It is impossible to make an uneducated man understand in what manner a bird, hatched nobody knows where—to-day living in my field, to-morrow in yours—should be as strictly property *as the goose, whose whole history can be traced from the egg to the spit.* The arguments upon which this depends are so contrary to the notions of the poor—so repugnant to their passions—and perhaps so much above their comprehension, that they are totally unavailing. *The same man* who would respect an orchard, a *garden, or an hen-roost*, scarcely thinks *he is committing any fault in invading the game-covers of his richer neighbour;* and as soon as he becomes tired of honest industry, his first resource is in plundering the rich magazines of hares, pheasants, and partridges—the top and bottom dishes—which, on every side his village, are running and flying before his eyes."

LAST PAMPHLETS.

Mr. Smith's last writings were, a Pamphlet against the Ballot, a Letter on Imprisonment in Railway Carriages, and a Letter on Pennsylvanian Bonds. They exhibit all the power, sarcasm, wit, and logic which distinguish his earliest productions: he preserved his freshness and originality to the last. "Railroad travelling," he observes, "is a delightful

improvement of human life. Man is become a bird; he can fly longer and quicker than a Solan goose. The mamma rushes sixty miles in two hours to the aching finger of her conjugating and declining grammar-boy. The early Scotchman scratches himself in the morning mists of the north, and has his porridge in Piccadilly before the setting sun. The Puseyite priest, after a rush of one hundred miles, appears with his little volume of nonsense at the breakfast of his bookseller. Everything is near, everything is immediate—time, distance, and delay are abolished. But, though charming and fascinating as all this is, we must not shut our eyes to the price we shall pay for it. There will be, every three or four years, some dreadful massacre—whole trains will be hurled down a precipice, and two hundred or three hundred persons will be killed on the spot. There will be, every now and then, a great combustion of human bodies, as there has been at Paris," referring to a recent railway catastrophe.

VISIT FROM SOUTHEY.

A gentleman, residing in Bristol, in 1838, who signed himself R——, was invited by Southey to accompany him and his son on a visit to Mr. Sydney Smith at Combe Fleury. He thus describes his reception,—

"We arrived at the village about noon, and, having alighted at the little inn, we all four proceeded towards the vicarage where Mr. Smith resided, a country lad officiating as our guide through the somewhat intricate lanes. We had proceeded about three-quarters of a mile, when the clodhopper, mounting a gate, pointed with his huge hand to a portly gentleman in a black dress and top-boots, who was leisurely riding along on a rough-looking cob, and opening his eyes and capacious mouth to the fullest extent of which each was capable, exclaimed, 'There be Passon Smith yander.' And, surely enough, the 'passon' it was, and towards him we made our way.

"He did not recognise Southey, but looking hard at him and us, was about to pass on, when the laureate went towards him and accosted him by name. Almost instant recognition took place, and the personal friends, although violent political enemies, cordially greeted each other. Smith alighted from his horse, and directing our guide to take it to the stable, turned with us towards the house, asking a hundred questions,

and ever and anon expressing his delight at the unexpected visit.

"The vicarage was anything but pleasantly situated, and, in itself, more resembled a farm-house than a village pastor's 'modest mansion.' Everything about it was in sad disorder, and plainly enough evidenced that no woman's hand presided over the arrangement of the establishment. We got to the front door through a littered-up court yard, and, after passing through a stone-paved hall, were conducted into the library, a large room, full of old-fashioned furniture, where books, parliamentary reports, pamphlets, and letters, lay all about, in most admired confusion.

"'This is my workshop,' he observed to Southey; 'as black as any smithy in Christendom.'

"And the neat and precise laureate seemed to think so, for he looked cautiously about for a clean chair, folded up his coat-tails, and was preparing to sit down, when Smith, with a sly gravity, wiped with his handkerchief (none of the cleanest) the dust from an old folio edition of the works of one of the fathers of the Church, and requested his friend to sit on it.

"Southey shrunk from the profanation, and, respectfully removing the work, preferred the dusty chair. I do not think he much relished the joke, although he said nothing. I could not help thinking that he was mentally comparing, or rather contrasting, the appearance of Smith's library with that of his own exquisitely neat one at Keswick. Alas! ere long he would wander into that learned retreat, there gaze for hours, with an idiotic smile, on a favourite black letter volume, and then submit himself, like a child, to the guiding hand of an attendant, and be led out; for, in the days of his insanity, it was a strange fact, that although fond of finding his way into his beloved library, he never could discover the way *out* of it.

"The conversation was pretty general, and chiefly related to the old friends of either party. Mr. Smith spoke of Coleridge in the highest terms, but severely deprecated his indolence. Referring to Charles Lamb's intemperate habits, he remarked, 'He draws so much beer that no wonder he buffoons people—he must have a *butt* to put it in.'

"At this time, the question of the authorship of that strange, but clever and learned book, the *Doctor*, was a doubtful one, and much mooted in literary circles. Many suspected, and indeed named, Southey as the writer; but he

never either admitted or denied the fact of his being so. The conversation turned on the subject, and Smith, with a roguish twinkle in his eye, told Southey that he knew who was the author. Southey calmly inquired the name, and the reverend gentleman remarked, 'I remember, some years since, enjoying a conversation with one Robert Southey, in which he used the exact words which I find here,' and he read from a page of the *Doctor* a passage, and then said, 'Now, Mr. Laureate, it needs no conjuror to convince any one of common sense that the writer of the passage I have read, and the utterer of those very words to me seven years since, are one and the same person.' Southey bit his lip, but said nothing. After his death, Mrs. Southey divulged the secret, which her husband kept till his death. I question whether she would have made known the fact of the authorship, had not some shabby fellows, by judicious nods and well-timed faint denials, gained the credit of being connected with the work.

"We sat down to a plain country dinner, after which

'The glasses sparkled on the board.'

"Like Friar Tuck, the Canon of St. Paul's enjoyed creature comforts, and many were the flashes of wit which set us in a roar. Southey was very abstemious, and refused wine, alleging his recent seizure as an excuse. Smith rattled away like a great boy; and, with the sole exception of Theodore Hook, I never heard any one so brilliant in conversation. No subject came amiss to him, and he seemed at home in every one. Of humbugs, both political and personal, he had the most utter detestation, and freely expressed his opinions. I shall not soon forget the ridicule which he that day heaped on the head of Robert Montgomery, who had then just published his poem, *Satan*."

DEATH OF LORD HOLLAND.

In 1841, Smith lost his old and valued friend, Lord Holland, of which he thus speaks in a letter: "It is indeed a great loss to me; but I have learned to live, as a soldier does in war, expecting that on any one moment the best and the dearest may be killed before his eyes. . . . I have gout, asthma, and seven other maladies, but am otherwise very well.

"SYDNEY SMITH."

He left among his papers a sketch of Lord Holland, in which it is remarked: "He was one of the most consistent and

steady politicians living in any day; in whose life, exceeding sixty-five years, there was no doubt, varying, nor shadow of change. It was one great, incessant, and unrewarded effort to resist oppression, promote justice, and restrain the abuse of power."

PRAYER FOR THE PRINCE OF WALES.

On the Sunday after the birth of the then Duke of Cornwall, (Nov. 9, 1841,) the Rev. Sydney Smith introduced the following into the prayer at St. Paul's Cathedral before the sermon:

"We pray also for that Infant of the Royal Race, whom in thy good providence Thou hast given us for our future King. We beseech Thee so to mould his heart and fashion his spirit, that he may be a blessing and not an evil to the land of his birth. May he grow in favour with man, by leaving to its own free force and direction the energy of a free People! May he grow in favour with God, by holding the Faith in Christ fervently and feelingly, without feebleness, without fanaticism, without folly! As he will be the first man in these realms, so may he be the best;—disdaining to hide bad actions by high station, and endeavouring always, by the example of a strict and moral life, to repay those gifts which a loyal people are so willing to spare from their own necessities to a good King."

THE PENNSYLVANIAN BONDS.

Towards the close of 1843, Mr. Sydney Smith petitioned the American Congress for payment of the debt due to England by the repudiating States: and he thus explained his motive for taking this extraordinary step: "I am no enemy to America; I loved and admired honest America when she respected the laws of pounds, shillings, and pence, and I thought the United States the most magnificent picture of human happiness. I meddle in these matters because I hate fraud; because I pity the misery it has occasioned; because I mourn over the hatred it has excited against free institutions."

He was, of course, much abused by the American press; though every honourable man in America must have been grateful to him for the deep moral feeling with which he wrote upon this painful subject.

One of these conscientious persons was Mr. Ticknor, who, in the *Boston Semi-weekly Advertiser*, speaks thus of Mr. Smith's position: "he made in his old age some savings; and having confidence in free institutions and American honesty, he invested a part, or the whole, of these savings in Pennsylvania stocks. But his interest there is not paid, and his capital is shrunk to a merely nominal value. He of course complains. He tells us even that we are not honest. We answer, you 'rave,' you are 'impertinent,' you are 'impudent,' you are 'a reverend slanderer.' But what, in the meantime, do honourable men everywhere say about us? and how comfortably does an American, always before so proud to call himself such, feel, who is now travelling in any part of the world out of his own country? Nay, how do we ourselves feel about our conduct and character in our own secret hearts *at home?*"

Mr. Ticknor then allows that the Mr. Sydney Smith was only, after all, the representative of a very large class of men, chiefly in England, who thought and talked of the indebted States of America exactly as he did.

About this time, there occurred in the list of passengers in the *Great Western* steamship the name of Sydney Smith, when it was trumpeted through the land that "the scourge of repudiating Pennsylvania" had arrived: it was then arranged that he should be not tarred, feathered, or lynched, but fêted with dinners; and "even Pennsylvania was to meet him with cordial salutations." But the passenger turned out to be not the Prebendary of St. Paul's, but a New York trader.

The Bishop of New Jersey, (misled by the above report,) offered Mr. Smith the hospitality of his palace. Meanwhile, every packet from the other side of the Atlantic brought shoals of abuse, which much amused Smith; of which, on one occasion, he wrote to a friend, "they seem puzzled with the whole thing, and cannot make me out. What a mistake, to depreciate my beauty and my orthodoxy!"

There came also letters of gratitude for his exertions; and many a distressing tale of losses occasioned by this want of faith in the repudiating States; besides, adds Lady Holland, "little offerings, such as apples, cheese, &c., from unknown individuals; unwilling, as they said, to share the public shame, and offering their quota towards the payment of the Pennsylvanian debt."

HIS CONTENT.

A few months before his death, Smith wrote to M. Eugene Robin: "I am seventy-four years old, and being canon of St. Paul's, in London, and a rector of a parish in the country, my time is divided equally between town and country. I am living amidst the best society in the metropolis, am at ease in my circumstances, in tolerable health, a mild Whig, a tolerating Churchman, and much given to talking, laughing, and noise. I am upon the whole a happy man, have found the world an entertaining world, and am heartily thankful to Providence for the part allotted to me in it."

DEATH OF THE REV. SYDNEY SMITH.

In October, 1844, Mr. Smith was taken seriously ill at Combe Florey; Dr. Holland went down, and advised his coming up to town. He bore the journey well; and for two months, though very weak, went out in his carriage, and received his friends in Green-street. He was kept on low diet, and not allowed meat; which led him to say, one day, to General Fox, "Ah, Charles! I wish I were allowed even the wing of a roasted butterfly."

His symptoms soon became more urgent. Dr. Chambers, at the request of Dr. Holland, was called in: that evening Mr. Smith told his nurse that he knew his danger, and said where and how he wished to be buried: he then spoke to all his family, and begged they would keep their spirits up.

He bore his sufferings with calmness and patience. He spoke but little. "Once," says Lady Holland; "he said to me, taking my hand, 'I should like to get well, if it were only to please Dr. Holland; it would, I know, make him so happy: this illness has endeared me much to him.'"

One evening, when he had been long silent, he broke forth in a strong voice, in this reflective retrospect: "We talk of human life as a journey; but how variously is that journey performed! There are some who come forth girt, and shod, and mantled, to walk on velvet lawns and smooth terraces, where every gale is arrested, every beam is tempered. There are others who walk on the Alpine paths of life, against driving misery, and through stormy sorrows, over sharp afflictions; walk with bare feet and naked breast, jaded, mangled,

and drilled." This beautiful passage is from his Sermon on Riches.

He lingered not many days longer, seemingly prepared to meet death with calmness and resignation. The last person he saw was his brother Bobus, who survived him but a few days—literally fulfilling the petition in a letter written two-and-thirty years before, "to take care of himself and wait for him." The words of the letter are: "We shall both be a brown, infragrant powder in thirty or forty years. Let us contrive to last out for the same time, or nearly the same time."

The Rev. Sydney Smith expired on the 22d of February, 1845; his son closing his eyes. His death was caused by water on the chest, consequent upon disease of the heart.

Lady Holland's account of his last moments are full of the strongest affection and tenderness: indeed, every page of her memoir of her excellent father tells us how she shared the sorrows and joys of his active and well-spent life; and how great must have been her consolation in her affliction at his loss, in knowing that he passed from this world in doing good: his death-bed was lighted up by the pure and holy flame of his love of his fellow-creatures, to guide him to a brighter and a better world. The incident to which we refer is thus touchingly told:—

"My father died in peace with himself and with all the world; anxious, to the last, to promote the comfort and happiness of others. He sent messages of kindness and forgiveness to the few he thought had injured him. Almost his last act was, bestowing a small living of 120*l.* per annum on a poor, worthy, and friendless clergyman, who had lived a long life of struggle with poverty on 40*l.* per annum. Full of happiness and gratitude, he entreated he might be allowed to see my father; but the latter so dreaded any agitation, that he most unwillingly consented, saying, 'Then he must not thank me; I am too weak to bear it.' He entered—my father gave him a few words of advice,—the clergyman silently pressed his hand, and blessed his death-bed. Surely, such blessings are not given in vain!"

THE BURIAL-PLACE.

The Rev. Sydney Smith was buried, by his own desire, in a very private manner, in the cemetery at Kensal Green, in

the public vault, catacomb B. His eldest son, Douglas, and Mrs. Sydney Smith, repose by his side.

The epitaph on this good and great man is as follows :—

TO

SYDNEY SMITH,

ONE OF THE BEST OF MEN.

HIS TALENTS, THOUGH ADMITTED BY HIS CONTEMPORARIES TO BE GREAT,

WERE SURPASSED BY

HIS UNOSTENTATIOUS BENEVOLENCE, HIS FEARLESS LOVE OF TRUTH,

AND HIS ENDEAVOUR TO PROMOTE THE HAPPINESS OF MANKIND

BY RELIGIOUS TOLERATION

AND BY

RATIONAL FREEDOM.

He was born the 3rd of June, 1771; he became Canon-Residentiary of St. Paul's Cathedral, 1831; he died February the 22nd, 1845.

DEATH OF MR. ROBERT SMITH.

But a fortnight after the death of the Rev. Sydney Smith, his elder and much-loved brother, Robert Smith, Esq., died at his residence in London. Robert Smith was born in 1770. He was educated at Eton, where he was the associate of Canning, Lord Holland, &c. He was a contributor to the *Microcosm*, and was distinguished for his classical performances. Mr. Robert Smith was called to the bar, and was for nine years Advocate-General at Bengal. On his return from India, he entered the House of Commons as member for Lincoln, and continued in Parliament till 1826. Among his intimate friends were Sir James Mackintosh and Madame de Staël; and, though he did not possess the literary talents of his gifted brother, he was accounted one of the remarkable men of his day.

PORTRAITS, &c.

The portrait which accompanies this volume represents the Rector of Foston in the prime of life. It is copied from a very spirited likeness, beaming with intelligence and intellectual energy, which appeared in the *British Portrait Gallery:*

"Wherein the graver had a strife
With Nature, to out-do the life."

The portrait published with his collected works, represents the reverend author in his later years. He was himself fond of making merry with his person—which was not slim. He introduces to us, now and then, "a canon of large proportions," just as Swift used to speak of himself:—

> "The priest was pretty well in case,
> And show'd some humour in his face;
> Look'd, with an easy, careless mien,
> A perfect stranger to the spleen;
> Of size that might a pulpit fill,
> But more inclining to sit still.
> * * * * who, if a man may say't,
> Loves mischief better than his meat."

Here is another illustration, by way of anecdote, from Moore's Diary. One evening, when Smith and Moore were returning from a dinner-party at the Longmans'; the road being rather awkward, the coachman was desired to wait at the bottom. "It would never do," (said Smith to Moore,) "when your memoirs come to be written, to have it said, 'He went out to dine at the house of his respectable publishers, Longman and Co., and being overturned on his way back, was crushed to death by *a large clergyman.*'"

As to personal appearance, Sydney Smith was about the average height, or a trifle above it, inclined to corpulency, and of a fresh red-and-white complexion and powerful eyes. The expression of his features was pleasing, and his snowy hair gave him an appearance of venerability, from which good humour, his prevailing characteristic, did not detract.

Among his peculiarities of dress was a large white neck-cloth, which was so ample as to resemble a pudding-bag.

Some caricatures of the Rev. Sydney Smith exaggerate his corpulency, and represent him as "a round man" of no ordinary girth, with a sly twitch in his nose, a wit *emunctæ naris*. These, however, were mere extravagances, at which he himself laughed.

CHARACTERISTICS, RETROSPECTIVE OPINIONS, AND PERSONAL TRAITS.

In *Bentley's Miscellany* appeared, immediately after Mr. Smith's death, a fair estimate of his literary character: "the homely vigour of his language, the weight of his well-directed sarcasm, the cheerful buoyancy of his imagination, and the brilliant refinement of his wit—which flashed both to dazzle and to scathe. Endowed with a large share of natural good sense, and a shrewd and penetrating understanding that could look beneath the surface of men and things, improved by a careful education, diligent study for many years, and close intimacy with the best writings of ancient and modern times; and possessing a heart capable of the warmest and most generous emotions, he expressed his thoughts in rich and racy Saxon, the clearness, the chasteness, and the energy of which silence and confound the gainsayer, carry conviction to the judgment, and at once strike home to the heart.

"Sydney Smith was a thorough Englishman. He loved old England well; and, saving his cloth, would have fought for his country had it been necessary. He had no small share of the John Bull spirit,—manly independence, strong convictions, clear views, and unswerving integrity. He seized a subject with a tenacious grasp, examined it with steadiness, caution, and deliberation; and with a force and decision of character, which have left their impress on the times in which he lived, formed decided opinions without reference to the prevailing prejudices or current fallacies of the day. (The latter he delighted to seize—to scotch at once, without giving them time to do mischief, and then pretend to a greater merit in correcting the error.)

He was not time-serving, or venal, or self-seeking. His pen was never employed but on the side of what he believed to be truth and justice: he hated oppression, and always protested against wrong. He was a decided politician, and yet was free from the virulence, the biases, and the narrow prepossessions of party men." (Considering that he was a

party man, it is remarkable how little he was assailed. Probably, the tenacity with which he retorted upon the Reviewer of his first Sermons, had some effect in keeping off future attacks.)

Of the *Memoir*, by his daughter, Lady Holland, published in 1855, it is scarcely possible to speak too highly: its affection is only equalled by its truthfulness and trustworthiness; and in numberless instances, the diffidence with which the encomiums are given, lest the reader should impute to the writer partiality, adds considerably to the value of these testimonies; as does also the scrupulous attention paid to the names and dates—of the opinions of others. The memoir occupies the first volume: the second consists of a selection from Mr. Smith's Letters, judiciously edited by Mrs. Austin.

We have often halted in these pages to admire Mr. Sydney Smith's consistent intrepidity in assailing what Mrs. Austin properly terms the "stolid prejudices, stupid and malignant antipathies, and time-honoured abuses, out of which we have emerged. Many of the giants Sydney Smith combated, (adds Mrs. Austin,) are not only slain, but almost forgotten; and thus the very completeness of his success tends to efface from the minds of the present generation the extent of their obligations to him. But it ought never to be forgotten that, at the time he buckled on his armour, all those had nearly undisputed possession of the field. The combat was then a service of real danger. The men who now float on the easy and rapid current of reform are apt, in the intoxication of their own facile triumphs, to forget the difficulties and perils which their predecessors had to encounter.

"He was a giant when roused, and the goad which roused him was injustice. He was clear from envy, hatred, and all uncharitableness, and incapable of any littleness. He was ever ready to defend the weak. He showed as much zeal in saving a poor village boy, as in aiding a minister of state. His hatred of every form of cant and affectation was only equalled by his prompt and unerring detection of it."

His cheerfulness was unvarying, and contributed to what Mrs. Austin terms "the symmetry of his life." He was never the sport of circumstances; and though he began life with a struggle, he did not repine, but kept on his course of rectitude; and when he had obtained better fortune, he was delighted to tell his friends of it, after he had thanked God for it."

IN THE PULPIT.

We have already noticed the Rev. Mr. Smith's early attempts to reform the style of preaching at the time he took orders. (*See page* 231.) As he advanced in life, his manner became still more impressive; and this effect was, no doubt, strengthened by what a Correspondent of the author of the *Memoir* calls "a simple and straightforward method of treating the subject," and the preacher's "improvement of the text, not encumbered by references to historical or traditional details; and whose style, clear, logical, and fervid, carries with him the reason as well as the feeling of his audience, by making their intellects a party to their conviction."

Mrs. Austin, in a sketch sent to her friend Lady Holland, describes her impressions on hearing Mr. Smith preach for the first time in St. Paul's. Mrs. Austin had been accustomed to his face and voice ever associated with wit and mirth; but, "the moment he appeared in the pulpit, all the weight of his duty, all the authority of his office, were written on his countenance; and without a particle of affectation (of which he was incapable,) his whole demeanour bespoke the gravity of his purpose." As soon as he began to speak, "it seemed as if his deep, earnest tones were caught with silent eagerness;" and Mrs. Austin remembered no religious service which ever appeared to her more solemn or more impressive.

A Scotch friend of the family writes: "The first sermon I heard in Combe Florey church was certainly meant for my good—'Cast your care upon God, for He careth for you.' It was so comforting and encouraging! With what delight did I look and listen, in that church, to the grand form and powerful countenance, noble and melodious voice! In reading the Lessons and Psalms, he read so as almost to make a commentary on every word, the meaning came out so rich and deep. His sermons were not given in St. Paul's with more interest and effect; and yet they were adapted for the congregation, from their plain and practical sense. Remembering him in St. Paul's crowded cathedral, and looking at him in the little village church, filled with peasantry, I was pleased to see him always the same."

Whenever he preached in a strange church, he used to "try the pulpit," as he termed it. "I can't bear," said he, "to be imprisoned in the true orthodox way in my pulpit, with my head just peeping above the desk. I like to look

down upon my congregation—to fire into them. The common people say, I am a *bould preacher*, for I like to have my arms free, and to thump the pulpit."

He used to relate an odd *contretemps* that once happened to him, when standing in the pulpit upon a pile of hassocks. His text was, "We are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." He had scarcely uttered these words, when the pile of hassocks gave way, down he fell, and had nearly been precipitated into the arms of his congregation, who, to their credit, recovered their gravity sooner than could have been expected.

Mr. Moore had this odd record of a sermon preached at his village in Wiltshire, when the preacher was his visitor: "Had a good sermon from Sydney Smith; only that it was all expressly addressed to people living in London (one of his St. Paul's sermons, in short), and therefore ninety miles wide of the mark."

In preaching a charity sermon, he frequently repeated the assertion that, of all nations, Englishmen were most distinguished for generosity and the love of their species. The collection happened to be inferior to his expectations, and he said that he had evidently made a great mistake; for that his expression should have been, that they were distinguished for the love of their *specie*.

His quizzing the fashion of preaching is very droll. He was breakfasting at Mr. Rogers's, and talking of the stories about dram-drinkers catching fire, he pursued the idea in every possible shape. The inconvenience of a man coming too near the candle when he was speaking, "Sir, your observation has caught fire." He then imagined a parson breaking into a blaze in the pulpit; the engines called to put him out; no water to be had, the man at the waterworks being an Unitarian or an Atheist.

On calling, with Mr. Moore, to see his (Moore's) portrait, Smith said, in his gravest manner, to the painter, Newton, "Couldn't you contrive to throw into his face somewhat of a stronger expression of hostility to the Church Establishment?"

Daniel O'Connell presented Smith to his friends, saying, "Allow me to introduce to you the ancient and amusing defender of our faith;" on which Sydney laughingly interrupted him, saying, "Of your *cause*, if you please; *not* of your faith."

When Lord Lansdowne and Moore had arranged to go to see Prior Park, Smith charged the poet with a design upon Lord L.'s orthodoxy, and recommended that there should be some sound Protestant tracts put up with the sandwiches in the carriage. Lord Lansdowne afterwards said of the Park and its priest, "If I had been a Protestant old lady, that place would have alarmed me not a little."

HIS ADVOCACY OF FEMALE INTELLECT.

Mrs. Austin pays a grateful tribute to Sydney Smith's unceasing attempts to obtain for women toleration for the exercise of their understandings, and for the culture of their talents; while in this, as in all his demands for reform, he kept within the bounds of the safe and the possible. "He had no desire to convert women into pedants, to divest them of any of the attributes or attractions of their sex, or to engage in the vain attempt to create for them a new and independent position in society.

"What he asked for women was, opportunity and encouragement to make themselves the intelligent companions of men of sense, or to furnish themselves with ideas and pursuits which might give interest to lives otherwise insipid and barren." He "was too completely above cant and imposture to deny the influence and the value of youth and beauty; but he laboured to induce women to acquire some substitutes for beauty, some resources against old age, some power of commanding attention and respect when the visionary charms of youth have fled."

His Letters extend through three-and-forty years, and occupy nearly 450 pages, and are 567 in number. It is impossible to convey any idea of the wit, humour, and affectionate playfulness, the wisdom and honesty, conveyed in these letters: each has its brilliant points; and it may be a salutary hint to the writers of long letters, (generally condemned as bores,) that scarcely one of the epistles in this selection occupies a page of large type.

SLOW PERCEPTION OF HUMOUR.

"I think it was Jekyll," observes Mr. Smith, "who used to say, that 'the further he went west, the more convinced he felt that the wise men did come from the east.' We have not such an article. You might ride from the rising up of the

sun until the going down thereof in these regions, and not find one (I mean a real philosopher) whom you would consult on the great affairs of life. We are thoroughly primitive; agriculture and agricultural tools are fifty years behind the rest of England."

He then relates how a neighbouring squire called upon him one day, and informed him he had been reading a delightful book. Mr. Smith inquired the subject. "Oh," replied the squire, "the 'Arabian Nights' Entertainments.' I have just got it, and I advise you to read it. I assure you, Mr. Smith, you will find it a most amusing book." Mr. Smith thanked his neighbour, agreed with him, but added that the book was not entirely unknown to him.

The slowness of his country neighbours in the perception of humour most amused him. He remembered making a joke after a meeting of the clergy in Yorkshire, where there was a Rev. Mr. Buckle, who never spoke; when Mr. Smith gave his health, saying he was *a Buckle without a tongue.* Most persons within hearing laughed; but Mr. Smith's next neighbour sat unmoved, and sunk in thought. At last, a quarter of an hour after they had all done, he suddenly nudged Mr. Smith, exclaiming, "I see what you meant; you meant a joke." "Yes, sir, I believe I did," was the reply. Then the squire began laughing so heartily, that it was feared he would choke.

Dining in the neighbourhood of York, Mr. Smith happened to say, "Though he was not generally considered an illiberal man, yet he must confess he had one little weakness, one secret wish,—he should like to *roast a Quaker.*"

"Good heavens! Mr. Smith!" said Mr. D——, full of horror, "roast a Quaker?" "Yes, sir," (with the greatest gravity,) "roast a Quaker!" "But do you consider, Mr. Smith, the torture?" "Yes, sir," said Mr. S., "I have considered everything; it may be wrong, as you say: the Quaker would, undoubtedly, suffer acutely, but every one has his tastes, mine would be to roast a Quaker: one would satisfy me, only one; but it is one of those peculiarities I have striven against in vain, and I hope you will pardon my weakness."

The simple gentleman could hardly sit at table; the company roared with laughter, but Mr. D—— had no conception of the joke, and Mr. Smith, seeing that he was giving pain, gave up his roasted Quaker, acknowledging it to be wrong;

but at the same time seeing that nothing would have made the joke understood by the grave, matter-of-fact gentleman.

READING AND STUDY.

The rapidity with which Mr. Smith read, or made himself acquainted with the best portions of a book, was surprising. In this manner he was known to get through a thick quarto within a morning. Lady Holland does not, however, think he had a very retentive memory.

He did not consider his education finished; for he studied hard at an advanced period of his life; and his plan of study for 1821 included the reading of Greek and Latin classics; portions of other days being set apart for writing reviews and sermons.

He used to say there were two questions to be asked respecting every new publication:—Is it worth buying? Is it worth borrowing?

For recreation he read the new books of the day—as Sir Walter Scott's Novels, and his *Life of Napoleon*, of which latter he seems to have entertained a higher opinion than other critics. He appears to have been very fond of novels; and we find him addressing a note of "impertinent eulogy" to Mr. Charles Dickens on the appearance of one of his serial stories. The author and the witty canon thenceforth became friends; and in a letter from the latter we find a playful request that two ladies be in the next number, and Lady Charlotte Lyndsay married to Newman Noggs.

It will be recollected that Mr. Smith, in the *Edinburgh Review*, was the first critic of mark to pronounce a high eulogium upon Mr. Hope's *Anastasias*, "which places him at once in the highest list of eloquent writers, and of superior men;" and in which he "bursts out into descriptions which would not disgrace the pen of Tacitus, and displays a depth of feeling and a vigour of imagination which Lord Byron could not excel."

HIS WIT AND WISDOM.

Sir Henry Holland has well remarked that "if Mr. Sydney Smith had not been the greatest and most brilliant of wits, he would have been the most remarkable man of his time for a sound and vigorous understanding and great reasoning powers; and if he had not been distinguished for these, he

would have been the most eminent and purest writer of English."

His "Wit and Wisdom" shine forth in every page of his writings: yet he was not what is termed a very great and laborious reader, and was little indebted to the books he read, as he relied upon his own observation of men and manners: hence his *originality*, in proof of which the reader has only to consult the volume entitled *Wit and Wisdom of the Reverend Sydney Smith*, lately published, but already in its third edition. Here is no garnering or sweeping up from old authors, no pages of musty quotations, but the fresh impressions of our own times, conveyed in masculine English, as pure and undefiled as the well of any age of literature. Here are two specimens of this wonderful world-knowledge:

A great deal of talent is lost in the world for the want of a little courage. Every day sends to their graves a number of obscure men, who have only remained in obscurity because their timidity has prevented them from making a first effort, and who, if they could have been induced to begin, would in all probability have gone some lengths in the career of fame. The fact is, that to do anything in this world worth doing, we must not stand back shivering and thinking of the cold and danger, but jump in and scramble through as well as we can. It will not do to be perpetually calculating tasks and adjusting nice chances. It did very well before the flood, where a man could consult his friends upon an intended publication for a hundred and fifty years, and then live to see its success afterwards; but at present, a man waits and doubts, and hesitates, and consults his brother, and his uncle, and particular friends, till one fine day he finds that he is sixty years of age; and he has lost so much time in consulting his first cousin and particular friends, that he has no more time to follow their advice.

If you measure the value of study by the insight you get into subjects, not by the power of saying you have read many books, you will soon perceive that no time is so badly saved, as that which is saved by getting through a book in a hurry. For if to the time you have given you added a little more, the subject would have been fixed on your mind, and the whole time profitably employed; whereas, upon your present arrangement, because you would not give a little more, you have lost all. Besides, this is overlooked by rapid and superficial readers—that the best way of reading books with rapidity is to acquire that habit of severe attention to what they contain, that perpetually confines the mind to the single object it has in view. When you have read enough to have acquired the habit of reading without suffering your mind to wander, and when you can bring to bear upon your subject a great share of previous knowledge, you may then read with rapidity; before that, as you have taken the wrong road, the faster you proceed the more you will be sure to err.

WIT AND HUMOUR.

Although the pen of Sydney Smith never inflicted undeserved pain on any human being, his rare accomplishments as a table-wit did not fail to excite the jealousy of a few of his contemporaries. Southey, in the *Doctor*, calls him, with some malevolence, "Joke Smith," which it was indecorous to apply to a clergyman, who honoured his profession, and was honoured in it. How many of our great divines have also been wits!

Lord Byron is equally careless, to say the least of it, when he relates: "That mad wag, the Reverend Sydney Smith, sitting by a brother clergyman at dinner, observed afterwards that his dull neighbour had a *twelve-parson power* of conversation. A metaphor borrowed from the forty-horse power of a steam-engine."

He was much hurt at imputations of this kind, one instance of which was when he was told that George the Third, after reading some of his papers in the *Edinburgh Review*, is said to have remarked: "He is a very clever fellow, but he will never be a bishop."

He was most anxious to disabuse the public mind of this erroneous idea of himself; and he says to Mrs. Crowe, in a letter written in 1840: "I printed my reviews to show that I had not passed my life merely in making jokes, but had made use of what little powers of pleasantry I might be endowed with, to discountenance bad and encourage liberal and wise principles."

Sir Archibald Alison's estimate of Smith must be received *cum grano*; for we should take into account the very opposite qualities of the minds of the two writers—the one powerful and intense, straightforward and practical, and though fluent, never employing a word too much, but, as Swift defined a good style to be—employing proper words in proper places. Meanwhile, the Scottish historian is fluent in style, but superabundant in words and phrases, and though comprehensive, it is at a much greater expense of time and words than the wit and humourist whom he is reviewing. Here is his estimate:

"Though a reverend and pious divine, the Prebendary of St. Paul's had very little of the sacerdotal character in his writings. His conversational talents were great, his success in the highest London society unbounded; but the intoxicating

course neither relaxed the vigour of his application, nor deadened the warmth of his feelings. His powers, and they were of no ordinary kind, were always directed, though sometimes with mistaken zeal, to the interests of humanity. His sayings, like those of Talleyrand, were repeated from one end of the empire to the other. These brilliant and sparkling qualities are conspicuous in his writings, and have mainly contributed to their remarkable success both in this country and America. There is scarcely any scholarship, and little information, to be met with in his works. Few take them up to be instructed; many to be amused. He has little of the equanimity of the judge about him, but a great deal of the wit and jocularity of the pleader. He would have made a first-rate jury counsel, for he would alternately have driven them by the force of his arguments, and amused them by the brilliancy of his expressions. There is no more vigorous and forcible diatribe in our language than his celebrated letter on North American repudiation, which roused the attention, and excited the admiration, of the repudiators themselves. He has expressed in a single line a great truth, applicable, it is to be feared, to other nations besides the Americans:—'They preferred any load of infamy, however great, to any burden of taxation, however light.' But Sydney Smith's blows were expended, and wit lavished, in general, on subjects of passing or ephemeral interest; they were not, like the strokes of Johnson, levelled at the universal frailties and characteristics of human nature."

HANDWRITING.

He wrote so bad a hand, that on a passage being cut out of a letter by Mrs. Smith, and inclosed to him to be deciphered, he returned it, saying "he must decline ever reading his own handwriting twenty-four hours after he had written it." And he once apologised for not allowing one of his sermons to be seen, by saying, "he would send it with pleasure, but his writing was as if a swarm of ants, escaping from an ink-bottle, had walked over a sheet of paper without wiping their legs."

MR. CANNING.

Sydney Smith had a strong dislike to Canning: how ludicrous is the following explanation of the writer's special attention to the statesman! "It is only the public situation

which this gentleman holds which entitles me, or induces me, to say so much about him. He is a fly in amber: nobody cares about the fly: the only question is, how the devil did he get there? Nor do I attack him for the love of glory, but from the love of utility, as a burgomaster hunts a rat in a Dutch dyke, for fear it should flood a province."

Again, in Plymley's Third Letter he says—he is speaking of a sinuous parasite who is always grinning at the heels of Canning—"Nature descends down to infinite smallness. Mr. Canning has his parasites; and if you take a large, buzzing blue-bottle fly, and look at it in a microscope, you may see twenty or thirty little ugly insects crawling about it, which, doubtless, think their fly to be the bluest, grandest, merriest, most important animal in the universe, and are convinced the world would be at an end if it ceased to buzz."

Then, he talks of Canning's "schoolboy jokes and doggerel rhymes;" and says: "if some better remedy be not applied to the distractions of Ireland than the jocularity of Mr. Canning, they will soon put an end to his pension and to the pension of 'those near and dear relatives,' for whose eating, drinking, washing and clothing, every man in the United Kingdom now pays his twopence or threepence a-year. You may call these observations coarse, if you please; but I have no idea that the Sophias and Carolines of any man breathing are to eat national veal, to drink public tea, or wear Treasury ribands, and that we are to be told that it is coarse to animadvert upon this pitiful and eleemosynary splendour. If this is right, why not mention it? If it is wrong, why should not he who enjoys the ease of supporting his sisters in this manner bear the shame of it? Everybody seems hitherto to have spared a man who never spares anybody."

Then "the embroidered inanities and the sixth-form effusions" of Mr. Canning. . . . "I am sick of Mr. Canning. There is not a ha'p'orth of bread to all this sugar and sack." "Canning's crocodile tears should not move me."

As a reward for giving up a certain point, the administration are to be variously rewarded: "Mr. George Canning is to ride up and down Pall-Mall glorious upon a white horse, and they shall cry out before him, 'Thus shall it be done to the statesman who hath written "The Needy Knife-Grinder," and the German play.'"

ESTIMATE OF MACAULAY.

Mr. Smith tells us that he always prophesied the greatness of Macaulay from the first moment he saw him, then a very young and unknown man, on the Northern Circuit. "There are no limits to his knowledge, on small subjects as well as great; he is like a book in breeches. . . . Yes, (he adds,) I agree, he is certainly more agreeable since his return from India. His enemies might perhaps have said before (though I never did so) that he talked rather too much; but now he has occasional flashes of silence, that make his conversation perfectly delightful. But what is far better and more important than all this is, that I believe Macaulay to be incorruptible. You might lay ribbons, stars, garters, wealth, titles, before him in vain. He has an honest, genuine love of his country, and the world could not bribe him to neglect her interests."

OPINION OF SHERIDAN.

The great charm of Sheridan's speaking Mr. Smith considered to be his "multifariousness of style."

He tells us of a visit to Sheridan in the country, where he had taken a villa, and a large party had assembled. There was a magnificent dinner, with excellent wines, but not a candle to be had to go to bed by in the house; in the morning no butter appeared, or was to be procured for breakfast. Sheridan said it was not a *butter country*, he believed. "But with Sheridan for host, and *the charm of his wit and conversation*, who cared for candles, butter, or anything else?"

A RECOMMENDATION.

One of the most gratifying results of assisting one's friends is a recommendation of service that, in familiar phrase, turns out well. The completest instance we remember to have heard of is Mr. Sydney Smith's recommendation of his medical friend, Mr. Allen, to accompany Lord Holland to Spain, his Lordship having applied to Mr. Smith for such an introduction. Mr. Allen returned to England with Lord Holland from Spain, to Holland House, which he never after left, so valued were his high character and talents; he

"remained there even after Lord Holland's death, and died loved, honoured, and respected, by the whole of Lord Holland's family."—*Life, by Lady Holland.*

MEETS THEODORE HOOK.

The writer of the admirable sketch of Hook, in the *Quarterly Review*, says: "We have seen him in company with very many of the most eminent men of his time; and we never, until he was near his end, carried home with us the impression that he had been surpassed."

In a note to the reprint of the sketch from the *Review* the above passage is explained to allude to "the only two occasions when Mr. Hook sat at meat with the Reverend Sydney Smith. Political prejudice had kept them apart, though they had always had many friends in common. Towards Theodore's end, the late amiable Lady Stepney hazarded the experiment of inviting them to the same small dinner-party. They were both delightful, and mutually delighted; but the palm rested with Sydney. Soon after, Sir Roderick Murchison brought them together again at a somewhat larger party; but Theodore had in the interim declined still further. By that time he could drink nothing but brandy, and the effect was too visible."—See the Sketch, note, 1852.

MOORE'S SINGING.

Our Anacreon had a charming voice, and sang his own songs with wonderful grace and sweetness. One evening, at a party in Wiltshire at which Smith was present, the poet imagined that he, S., had not thoroughly appreciated his vocal talent, (as he left the party early,) and next morning wrote a note to the Canon to the above effect: it will be seen in the reply (from the Poet's *Diary*), with what felicity Sydney Smith turned this *contretemps* to humorous account:

MY DEAR MOORE,—By the beard of the prelate of Canterbury, by the cassock of the prelate of York, by the breakfasts of Rogers, by Luttrell's love of side-dishes, I swear that I had rather hear you sing than any person I ever heard in my life, male or female. For what is your singing but beautiful poetry floating in fine music and guided by exquisite feeling? Call me Dissenter, say that my cassock is ill put on, that I know not the delicacies of decimation, and confound the greater and the smaller tithes; but do not think or say that I am insensible to your music. The truth is, that I took a solemn oath to Mrs. Beauclerk to be there by ten, and set off to prevent perjury at eleven; but was seized with a violent pain in the stomach by the way, and went to bed.

Yours ever, my dear Moore, very sincerely,

SYDNEY SMITH.

MISCELLANIES.*

Mr. Sydney Smith was very comical about a remedy of Lady Holland's for the bookworms in the library at Holland House, having them washed with some mercurial preparation. Smith said, it was Davy's opinion that the air would become charged with the mercury, and that the whole family would be salivated. He added: "I shall see Allen some day with his tongue hanging out, speechless, and shall take the opportunity to stick a few principles into him!"

He said that —— was so fond of contradiction, that he would throw up the window in the middle of the night, and contradict the watchman who was calling the hour.

"Lady Cork," said Smith, "was once so moved by a charity sermon, that she begged me to lend her a guinea for her contribution. I did so. She never repaid me, and spent it on herself."

He portrays the Archdeacon of Newfoundland as a man who sits bobbing for cod, and pocketing every tenth fish.

His description of the treadmill punishment was a man walking up-hill like a turnspit-dog, in an infamous machine.

The same passion which peoples the parsonage with chubby children, animates the Arminian, and burns in the breast of the Baptist.

A foreigner, indulging in sceptical doubts of the existence of an overruling Providence in his presence, Sydney, who had observed him evidently well satisfied with his repast, said: "You must admit there is great genius and thought in that dish." "Admirable!" he replied; "nothing can be better." "May I then ask, are you prepared to deny the existence of the cook?"

Smith thus described the *dining process*, by which people in London extract all they can from new literary lions: "Here's a new man of genius arrived; put on the stewpan; fry away; we'll soon get it all out of him."

* These specimens are selected and condensed from various sources; as the Rev. Sydney Smith's Collected Works; Mr. Rogers's *Table Talk;* and, in a few instances, from Lady Holland's *Memoir;* and Mr. Moore's *Diary*, &c.; though it is scarcely practicable to trace each story to its original source.

Talking of bread made from sawdust, Sydney said people would soon have *sprigs* coming out of them. Young ladies, in dressing for a ball, would say, "Mamma, I am beginning to sprout."

At one time, when Mr. Rogers gave a dinner, he used to have candles placed all round the dining-room, and high up, in order to show off the pictures. He asked Sydney Smith how he liked that plan. "Not at all," he replied; "above there is a blaze of light, and below, nothing but darkness and gnashing of teeth."

Smith made it a rule never to speak a word to his neighbour at dinner, but fire across the table; though once he broke the rule, when hearing a lady who sat next him say, in a low, sweet voice, "No gravy, sir." He suddenly turned round, and said, "Madam, I have been looking for a person who disliked gravy all my life; let us swear eternal friendship."

When Mrs. Longman was about to entertain at dinner, Kirby and Spence, the entomologists, Sydney Smith suggested the bill of fare, containing "flea-pâtés, earth-worms on toast, caterpillars crawling in cream and removing themselves," &c.

"I had a very odd dream last night," said he; "I dreamed that there were thirty-nine Muses, and nine Articles; and my head is still quite confused about them."

"The Bishop of —— is so like Judas, that I now firmly believe in the apostolical succession."

It would be just as rational to give to a frog or rabbit, upon which the physician is about to experiment, an appeal to the Zoological Society, as to give to a country curate an appeal to the Archbishop against his purple oppressor.—*First Letter to Archdeacon Singleton.*

Smith told a story of a young officer in his first battle, who, having been for some time fighting without well knowing where he was, at last, seeing the party he was immediately engaged with giving way, took off his cap, and began roaring enthusiastically, "Victory! victory!" on which some veteran near him cried out, "Hold your tongue, you foolish fellow; we have been retreating these two hours."

Smith's imagination of a duel between two doctors, with oil of croton on the tips of their fingers, is highly ludicrous.

Rogers said truly of Smith, that whenever the conversation was getting dull, he threw in some touch which made it rebound, and rise again as light as ever. And on Moore's remarking to him how well and good-humouredly a host had mixed his company up together, Smith said, "That's the great use of a good conversational cook, who says to the company, 'I'll make a good pudding of you: it's no matter what you came into the bowl, you must come out a pudding.' 'Dear me,' says one of the ingredients, 'wasn't I just now an egg?' but he feels the batter sticking to him, &c."

Talking of the bad effects of late hours, Smith said of some distinguished diner-out, that there would be on his tomb, "He dined late,"—"and died early," rejoined Luttrell.

Smith, discoursing of the intelligence and concert which birds have among each other, cranes and crows, &c., showing that they must have some means of communicating their thoughts, said, "I dare say they make the same remark of us. That fat old crow there, (meaning himself,) what a prodigious noise he is making! I have no doubt he has some power of communicating," &c. After pursuing this idea comically for some time, he added, "But we have the advantage of them: they can't put us into pies, as we do them; legs sticking out of the crust," &c. The acting of all this made two-thirds of the fun of it: the quickness, the buoyancy, the self-enjoying laugh.

He thus enumerated and acted the different sorts of *hand-shaking* met with in society. The *digitory*, or one finger, exemplified in Brougham, who puts forth his fore-finger, and says, with his strong northern accent, "How *are* you?" The *sepulchral* or *mortemain* was Sir James Mackintosh's manner—laying his open hand flat and coldly against yours. The *high official* was the Archbishop of York's, who carried your hand aloft on a level with his forehead. Then came the *rural* or *vigorous* shake, &c.

Moore had an odd theory—that the main solution of women bearing pain better than men was in their having less physical sensibility. He offered to put it to the test by bringing in a hot tea-pot, which he would answer for the ladies of the party being able to hold for a much longer time than the men. This set Sydney Smith off most comically, upon Moore's

cruelty to the female part of the creation, and the practice he had in such experiments. "He has been all his life," (he said,) "trying the sex with hot tea-pots; the burning ploughshare was nothing to it. I think I hear his terrific tone in a *tête-à-tête*, 'Bring a tea-pot.'"

Smith's transition of manner was very remarkable. Moore tells us he has known him to change at once from the gay, uproarious wag, into as solemn, grave, and austere a person as any bench of judges or bishops could supply.

During his visit to an observatory, Smith said to the man, "Mr. ——, it must be very interesting to observe the progress of comets." "No, indeed, sir," answered the astronomer, "comets are very foolish things, and give a vast deal of trouble."

Smith was highly comical about Sir Henry Halford: his rout pill to carry a lady over the night; his parliamentary pill, &c.

When his physician advised him to "take a walk upon an empty stomach," Smith asked, "Upon whose?"

Speaking of the knowledge sailors have of ships at a great distance, he took them off, saying with a telescope to the eye, "D—n her, she's the *Delight*, laden with tallow."

If experience has taught us anything, it is the absurdity of controlling men's notions of eternity by Acts of Parliament.

The erection of Catholic convents in England has occasioned some needless alarm: they would only be dangerous, were incarceration in them compulsory; for, as the Rev. Sydney Smith observed, many years since, "Monasteries and nunneries with us would be harmless institutions; because the moment a devotee found he had acted like a fool, he might avail himself of the discovery, and run away."

[How ludicrous is this picture of the botanical and zoological wonders of Australia.] "In this remote part of the earth, Nature (having made horses, oxen, ducks, geese, oaks, elms, and all regular and useful productions for the rest of the world) seems determined to have a bit of play, and amuse herself as she pleases. Accordingly, she makes cherries with the stone on the outside; and a monstrous animal, as tall as a grenadier, with the head of a rabbit, a tail as big as a bedpost, hopping along at the rate of five hops to a mile, with three or four young kangaroos looking out of its false uterus.

to see what is passing. Then comes a quadruped as big as a large cat, with the eyes, colour, and skin of a mole, and the bill and web-feet of a duck, puzzling Dr. Shaw, and rendering the latter half of his life miserable, from his utter inability to determine whether it was a bird or a beast. Add to this, a parrot with the legs of a sea-gull; a skate with the head of a shark; and a bird of such monstrous dimensions, that a side-bone of it will dine three real carnivorous Englishmen;—together with many other productions that agitated Sir Joseph (Banks), and filled him with emotions of distress and delight."

Mrs. Trimmer, objecting to the rewards and punishments in Lancasterian schools, observed: "Boys accustomed to consider themselves the nobles of the school, may, in their future lives, form a conceit of their own merits, (unless they have very sound principles,) aspire to the nobles of the land, and to take the place of hereditary nobility." Upon which the Rev. Sydney Smith remarks: "For our part, when we saw these ragged and interesting little nobles shining in their tin stars, we only thought it probable that the spirit of emulation would make them better ushers, tradesmen, and mechanics. We did, in truth, imagine we had observed, in some of their faces, a bold project for procuring better breeches for keeping out the blasts of heaven, which howled through those garments in every direction, and of aspiring hereafter to greater strength of seam, and more perfect continuity of cloth. But for the safety of the titled orders we had no fear; nor did we once dream that the black rod which whipped these little, dirty dukes, would one day be borne before them as the emblem of legislative dignity and the sign of noble blood."

It is always considered as a piece of impertinence in England, if a man of less than 2,000*l.* or 3,000*l.* a-year has any opinions at all upon important subjects.

We act with the minds of young men as the Dutch did with their exuberant spices. An infinite quantity of talent is annually destroyed in the Universities of England by the miserable jealousy and littleness of ecclesiastical instructors.

[Here is, from one of his graphic reviews, a droll picture:—]

"Insects are the curse of tropical climates. Flies get entry into your mouth, into your eyes, into your nose; you eat flies, drink flies, and breathe flies. Lizards, cockroaches, and snakes get into your bed; ants eat up the books; scorpions sting you on the foot. Everything bites, stings, or bruises; every

second of your existence you are wounded by some piece of animal life, that nobody has ever seen before, except Swammerdam and Meriam. An insect with eleven legs is swimming in your teacup; a nondescript, with nine wings, is struggling in the small-beer; or a caterpillar, with several dozen eyes in his belly, is hastening over the bread and butter! All nature is alive, and seems to be gathering all her entomological hosts to eat you up, as you are standing, out of your coat, waistcoat, and breeches. Such are the tropics. All this reconciles us to our dews, fogs, vapours, and drizzle; to our apothecaries, rushing about with gargles and tinctures; to our old British, constitutional coughs, sore-throats, and swelled faces."

He used to say that the hams at his table were the only true hams—others were Shems and Japhets.

On Mathews saying, on some occasion, of Tom Hill, "Will nobody stop that fellow's mouth?" "Not *me*," said Smith; "I know the way to Highgate, but not to Muswell Hill (Muzzle Hill)."

Observing Lord Brougham's one-horse carriage, he remarked to a friend, alluding to the "B" surmounted by a coronet on the panel, "There goes a carriage with a "B" outside, and a *wasp* within."

There has been in all governments a great deal of absurd canting about the consumption of spirits. We believe the best plan is to let people drink what they like, and wear what they like; to make no sumptuary laws either for the belly or the back. In the first place, laws against rum and rum-and-water are made by men who can change a wet coat for a dry one whenever they choose, and who do not often work up to their knees in mud and water; and, in the next place, if this stimulus did all the mischief it is thought to do by the wise men of claret, its cheapness and plenty would rather lessen than increase the avidity with which it is at present sought for.

THEODORE HOOK.

THE HOOK FAMILY.—THEODORE BORN.

THEODORE EDWARD HOOK, the wit, novelist, and dramatic writer, was born September 22, 1788, in Charlotte-street, Bedford-square, London. He was the son of James Hook, the well-known musical composer, a native of Norwich, born in 1746, who showed at an early age a decided taste for music; and, owing to his being lamed by an accident, his parents had him instructed in music. In due time, he became organist to one of the churches at Norwich; whence he came to London, and was engaged in the same capacity at Marylebone Gardens; and finally settled at Vauxhall Gardens, where he remained for upwards of half a century. The organ was an important instrument in the public gardens of the last and early part of the present century: at Vauxhall, Hook was not only organist, but composer of songs for the gardens; and the middle-aged reader may recollect his name in the Vauxhall music-titles of those days, in conjunction with that popular and mellifluous songstress, Mrs. Bland. He was also organist of St. John's church, Horslydown, and was a most prolific music-writer, having composed 1160 complete works, and 2000 songs. He is highly spoken of by Dr. Burney, and by Parke, the oboe-player. He was a man of cheerful temper, and loved a joke. Walking with Mr. Parke along the Strand, they noticed a clean hackney-coach, No. 1, which Parke remarked, really looked as good as new. "There is nothing extraordinary in that," replied Hook; "everybody, you know, takes care of *number one!*"—a small sally, which bears a strong family resemblance to the humour of his son, Theodore.

Mr. James Hook was twice married: his first wife, Miss Madden, was distinguished for her beauty, and was the author of a piece called the *Double Disguise*, produced at Drury-lane Theatre, in 1784, her husband providing the music. By her

Mr. Hook had two sons, James and Theodore; the former was sent to Westminster School, where his ready wit brought him into contact with George Canning, then a student at Eton. In 1791, James Hook entered at St. Mary's Hall, Oxford, where he graduated, and took holy orders. He rose rapidly in the Church, partly by his political services to Mr. Pitt, who always entertained a great regard for him. In 1802, he was appointed chaplain to the Prince of Wales; of whom he became a personal friend, and, strange to say, this friendship lasted until the death of George IV. In 1807, he was appointed a prebend of Winchester; and, in 1825, to the deanery of Worcester.

He wrote a pamphlet of much merit, entitled *Publicola*, satirizing the patriotism of Paine, Horne Tooke, Godwin, Thelwall, and others of the same political fraternity. French Republicanism was also shown up by him in an Arabian tale; and he produced *The Good Old Times; or, the Poor Man's History of England*, which became deservedly popular. In his earlier years, being fond of the drama, he wrote the libretto for an operetta produced at Drury-lane in 1795, and for a musical entertainment at Covent Garden; his father, in each case, composing the music. But he is better remembered in our time by his two novels, *Pen Owen* and *Percy Mallory*, both published by Messrs. Blackwood, some forty years since. One contains a life-like sketch of the Cato-street conspiracy; and the other has an admirable portraiture of the witty Tom Sheridan, son of Richard Brinsley.

Hook's brother James was eighteen years his senior, and had the benefit of an excellent mother's watchfulness, all through the years of youth and early manhood. Theodore was but a child when this excellent woman was lost to her family. That the affection for his mother remained pure and undiminished, cannot be doubted; for, four-and-thirty years after, we find him writing of her funeral: "Years, years have rolled on, and yet that hour is still vividly fresh in my mind—the smell of the soldered coffin is still in my nostrils—the falling earth upon its lid still rings in my ears." The composer soon married again, but Theodore found not a second mother. Both the brothers may have had the same cast of disposition and temper; yet, through the loss of his mother, with what a disadvantage did Theodore start in life. He shadows this calamitous loss in his best novel, *Gilbert Gurney*, (which is autobiographical,) and who is represented as having a

single prosperous brother, exactly eighteen years older than himself.

In 1797, Dr. James Hook married the second daughter of Sir Walter Farquhar, Bart.; they had one son, Walter Farquhar, who has risen in the Church to equal rank with his father, being the present Dean of Chichester; and who, to his piety and eloquence as a divine, adds the high character of an able Church historian.

SCHOOL IN SOHO-SQUARE.

At an early age, Theodore was sent to a seminary in Soho-square; and the short walk from Charlotte-street to the school presented too many temptations to play the truant for Theodore to resist. The day of the illumination for the Peace of Amiens, he told his parents was a holiday; but the fib was detected, and then it was found that the little scapegrace had played truant for three weeks together; he was, therefore, locked up in the garret for the rest of the day, and so lost the sight of the national fireworks and illuminations.

Theodore was next sent to Dr. Curtis's academy at Linton, in Cambridgeshire; and here, at the age of thirteen, he wrote his first dramatic sketch, and picked up the hero for his novel, *Peregrine Bunce*. He removed with Dr. Curtis to Sunbury, but was soon after transferred to Harrow.

THEODORE AT HARROW.

Here he was the schoolfellow of Lord Byron and Sir Robert Peel. He tells us, in *Gilbert Gurney*, purposely varying the date, "I was born in the same year, and in the same month of the same year, as Lord Byron, but eight days later, on the 30th of January—a memorable day, too. I always felt a sort of sympathetic affection, as Byron advanced in age and reputation, in the recollection that, though with inherent respect for his rank and talents, I could not possibly take the liberty of coming into the world before him—I began my life so nearly about the same period." He says, also, of his time here: "My school life was not a happy one. I was idle and careless of my tasks. I had no aptitude for learning languages. I hated Greek, and absolutely shuddered at Hebrew. I fancied myself a genius; and anything that could be done in a hurry, I did tolerably well, but application I had not."

We have no contemporary evidence of Theodore's friendship with Lord Byron, who, however, mischievously instigated him on the night of his arrival to throw a stone and break the window of a room in which a lady was undressing. Nor is it explained what led Lord Byron to sneer at Hook in his *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, a taunt which Theodore repaid by most severely criticising in the *John Bull*, certain of the noble poet's works.

THEODORE AT OXFORD.

Hook's father, upon the urgent solicitation of his brother, arranged to continue Theodore's education for the bar. Accordingly, in 1804, Theodore was duly entered at Oxford, placed under the charge of his brother, the future Dean, and presented by him to the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Parsons, head of Balliol, and afterwards Bishop of Peterborough, for matriculation. The ceremony was well-nigh stopped *in limine*, in consequence of a piece of facetiousness on the part of the candidate—ill-timed, to say the least of it. On being asked if he was prepared to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles, "Oh, certainly, sir," replied Theodore; "*forty*, if you please." The horror of the Vice-Chancellor may be imagined. The young gentleman was desired to withdraw; and it required all the interest of his brother, who, fortunately, happened to be a personal friend of Dr. Parsons, to induce the latter to overlook the offence, and eventually the ceremony was completed. The joke, such as it is, was probably picked up out of one of Foote's farces, who makes *Mrs. Simony*, if we mistake not, say, when speaking of her husband, the *Doctor* (intended for the unfortunate Dr. Dodd), "He believes in *all* the Thirty-nine Articles; ay, and so he would if there were forty of them."

Another instance of Oxford impudence is attributed to Hook, but not, as in the preceding case, from his own lips. On the evening of his arrival at the University (says the narrator), he contrived to give his brother the slip, and joined a party of old schoolfellows in a carouse at one of the taverns. Sundry bowls of "bishop," and of a popular compound called "egg-flip,"—the Cambridge men call it "silky;" songs, amatory and bacchanalian, having been sung with full choruses; and, altogether, the jocularity having begun to pass "the limit of becoming mirth," the Proctor made his appear-

ance; and, advancing to the table at which the "freshman"—so in every sense of the word—was presiding, put the usual question, "Pray, sir, are you a member of this University?" "No, sir," replied Hook, rising and bowing respectfully; "pray, sir, are you?" A little disconcerted at the extreme gravity of the other, the Proctor held out his ample sleeve—"You see this, sir?" "Ah!" returned Hook, having examined the fabric with great earnestness for a few seconds, "yes, I perceive; Manchester velvet; and may I take the liberty, sir, of inquiring how much you might have paid per yard for the article?" The quiet imperturbability of manner with which this was uttered was more than the rev. gentleman could stand; and muttering something about "supposing it was a mistake," he effected a retreat, amid shouts of laughter from Hook's companions, in which the other occupants of the coffee-room, the waiters, and even his own "bull-dogs," were constrained to join.

Hook returned to London, little impressed with the solemnity of Oxford: his genius evidently lay in another direction, in which the gaieties, and not the gravities of life were the most prominent attractions.

THE SPOILED BOY.—EARLY DRAMAS.

Theodore did not return to Harrow after the death of his mother, in 1802. He was proud already of his son, who he employed to write a comic opera, for which the father composed the music. The piece was named *The Soldier's Return; or, What can Beauty do?* It was produced at Drury-lane, in 1805. The plot was very slight, and the incidents were extravagant; but Irish Johnstone, who played in it, by the help of abundant puns, carried it through triumphantly: the author was then but sixteen years old, and he received as his share of the proceeds, 50*l.*

His life at this period is sketched in *Gilbert Gurney*, where he makes the hero's brother reproach him as follows: "When I was young, I had a disposition for every sort of gaiety, and a turn of mind for satire and caricature; and if I had been left (do not be angry with me for the expression), kicking up and down about London, a lounger in the streets, an idler in society and a dangler in the playhouse green-rooms, my belief is that I should have ended my career in no very enviable position."

Hook next produced at the Haymarket Theatre, in 1806, the farce of *Catch him who can;* the plot turning on the escape of a suspected murderer, in which appeared together Liston and Mathews. The success of the latter in his assumption of six disguises so deceived the audience that in one instance they proved that they did not at first recognise the identity by receiving him in silence. But on the discovery the applause was rapturous. This established Hook's reputation as a farce-writer.

He soon showed that kind of waggery for which he was noted through life, namely, the love of practical joking. One night he *went on* the stage, in place of the regular performer of the character, to deliver a letter to Dowton, who was strangely disconcerted by this unrehearsed assumption. On another occasion, the gravity of the melo-drama of the *Wood Demon* was upset by his uttering in deep bass, "She-ri-dan for e-ver!" in the heat of a contested election for Westminster.

Another freak of this kind was played off on a young friend and his female cousin, who had been smuggled into the Haymarket Theatre unknown to their Presbyterian father. The young folks were seated in the dress circle, when Liston, who had consented to become *particeps joci,* advanced to the orchestra, and, looking round the house, said, with an offended air, "I don't understand this conduct, ladies and gentlemen. I am not accustomed to be laughed at; I can't imagine what you see ridiculous, in *me.* Why, I declare, there's Harry B—tor, and his cousin Martha J——," and he pointed to the happy pair; "what business have they to come here and laugh at me, I should like to know! I'll go and tell his father, and hear what *he* thinks of it." All eyes were, of course, directed to the young folks, who scrambled from their seats, and were glad to get out of the theatre.

HIS FIRST NOVEL.

In 1808, Theodore being in his 20th year, under the *nom de plume* of Alfred Allendale, Esq., produced his first novel, *The Man of Sorrow,* in which, as in the old Minerva Press novel, everything that happens is brought about by accident —lucky and unlucky; and so the events of the story are keyed together, as it were, by words: everything is all but done, and then prevented, or hinged upon something else.

This *modus operandi* has been well described in the *Quarterly Review* sketch,* where the hero and his mistress having eloped to Gretna Green, the waiter takes the order for a couple of roasted fowls and a parson at the same moment:

"The fowls are put to the fire—the blacksmith appears—the ceremony has just reached the essential point—when a chaise dashes up to the door;—out spring the heroine's mother and the rival again (he had been previously encountered on the road). Further on, the hero comes late at night to another inn, and is put into a double-bedded room, in which the rival happens to be fast asleep. The rival gets up in the morning before the hero awakes, cuts his thumb in shaving, walks out, sees a creditor, jumps on the top of a passing stage-coach, and vanishes. The hero is supposed to have murdered him;—the towel is bloody;—he must have contrived to bury the body;—he is tried, convicted, condemned;—he escapes;—an accident brings a constable to the cottage where he is sheltered;—he is re-captured—pinioned—mounts the drop;—he is in the act of speaking his last speech, when up dashes another post-chaise, containing the rival, who had happened to see the trial just the morning before in an old newspaper. And so on through three volumes."

The most extraordinary thing is, that at this age (in his twentieth year,) Hook wrote in *The Man of Sorrow* the following stinging passage, almost prophetic of his own fate:

"Are not the brightest talents made nothing worth by perpetual intoxication? Is not the statesman degraded, and the wit rendered contemptible, by a constant and habitual use of wine? Have we not examples before us where every earthly qualification is marred by it, and where poverty and ignominy are the reward of exertions weakened by its influence, which, used with sobriety and temperance, would deserve, and might have received, the meed of honour and the wreath of fame?"

His next drama was a piece from the *Babillard* of Charles Maurice: it was entitled the *Invisible Girl*, and was produced for the benefit of Jack Bannister, at Drury-lane, in 1806; it was a daring novelty, but Bannister's unbroken volubility carried it through; and the piece is familiar to the playgoers of the present day as the *Patter versus Clatter* of Mr. Charles Mathews.

* Theodore Hook. A Sketch. Reprinted from the *Quarterly Review*. Murray's Railway Reading.

In the same season, Hook produced the melodrama of *Tekeli, or the Siege of Montgratz*, which became very popular, and gave name to a favourite country-dance. It was an odd incident, in this piece, that led to Lord Byron's attack of Hook, in the *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers:*

> Gods! o'er those boards shall folly rear her head,
> Whom Garrick trod, and Kemble lives to tread?
> On those shall Farce display buffoonery's mask,
> And Hook conceal his heroes in a cask?

Soon after, he produced a piece of broad burlesque, entitled *Music run Mad*, taken from *Il Fanatico per la Musica*, in which the celebrated buffo Naldi so distinguished himself.

"KILLING NO MURDER."

This admirable farce was produced by Hook, in 1809, when the companies of the two greatest houses, recently burnt, were playing at the Lyceum Theatre. It was written for Mathews, as Buskin, and Liston as Apollo Belvi! But the great attraction of the piece was the severe castigation of Methodism which it originally contained: the Licenser objected to it as "an indecent and shameful attack upon a very harmless set of people," and "an infamous persecution of the sectaries;" for it appears that Liston's character was originally a Methodist preacher burlesqued, in which Hook had blended a dancing-master with the preacher. The part was modified as we now see it; but Hook published the piece as he wrote it, which the Licenser could not prevent: he may have been stimulated to this attack by Rowland Hill's congratulation from the pulpit on the destruction of Covent Garden Theatre, and the annihilation of a score of firemen—in these words, "Great news, my brethren,—great news—a great triumph has taken place over the devil and the stage-players—a fire in one of their houses. Oh! may there be one consumed every year! it is my fervent prayer!"

FIRST APPEARANCE ON THE STAGE.

Hook, in company with Henry Higginson, Wathen, and Mathews, enjoyed private theatricals, and Theodore wrote for one occasion a piece, which was long after performed at the Haymarket, under the title of *Pigeons and Crows.* He also produced a sort of burlesque upon *Hamlet*, entitled *Ass-ass-ination.*

Another successful farce of this period was his *Exchange no Robbery, or the Diamond Ring*, wherein Terry, as Cranberry, came out with his odd and dry and quiet humour, for which he had no rival.

In 1809, he appeared at his friend, Mr. Rolls's private theatre, as Sir Callaghan O'Brallaghan, in Macklin's farce of *Love à la Mode*, in which all the characters were played in imitation of public performers in the same parts. Mrs. Mathews, in the Memoir of her husband, gives the details of these performances, with the bills, which are clever things in their line. But, however confident Hook had been off the stage, and at the rehearsals, he was terrified before the first audience, and in the first scene could not be heard to sing or speak. Mrs. Mathews tells us this sensation is most like the commencement of sea-sickness. Hook recovered; and afterwards acted Vapour, in the farce of *My Grandmother*, imitating Mr. Farley excellently.

HOOK'S IMPROVISATION.

The writer of the *Quarterly* sketch, as far as his own knowledge went, considered Hook to be the only successful performer in this way in England: it is impossible to conceive anything more marvellous than the felicity he displayed: the *extemporaneousness* was undoubted, the staple was almost always what had occurred since he entered the room; and he did the thing far the best when stirred by the presence of strangers. He usually accompanied himself on the pianoforte.

Mrs. Mathews relates a most remarkable display—when the Drury-lane company gave Sheridan a dinner at the Piazza coffee-house, in honour of one of his electioneering successes. Hook was of the party, and was presented to Sheridan. Theodore was, in turn, solicited to sing, and he consented. The company was numerous, and generally strangers to Mr. Hook;—but, without a moment's premeditation, he composed a verse upon every person in the room, full of the most pointed wit, and with the truest rhymes—unhesitatingly gathering into his subject, as he rapidly proceeded, in addition to what had passed during the dinner, every trivial incident of the moment. Every action was turned to account; every circumstance, the look, the gesture, or any other accidental effects, served as occasion for more wit; and even the singer's ignorance of the names and condition of many of the party seemed to give greater facility to his brilliant hits than even

acquaintance with them might have furnished. Mr. Sheridan was astonished at his extraordinary faculty, and declared that he could not have imagined such power possible, had he not witnessed it. No description, he said, could have convinced him of so peculiar an instance of genius, and he protested that he should not have believed it to be an unstudied effort, had he not seen proof that no anticipation could have been formed of what might arise to furnish matter and opportunities for the exercise of this rare talent.—(*Life of Mathews*, vol. ii.)

This is stated to have been Hook's first display of this extraordinary talent: he was then in his twentieth year.

Sometimes, he was strangely puzzled by hard names, as in the case of a Mr. Rosenagen, a young Dane; but he mastered the difficulty as follows:

> Yet more of my Muse is required,
> Alas! I fear she is done;
> But no, like a fiddler that's tired,
> I'll Rosen—agen, and go on.

Mr. Moore bears this emphatic testimony, in his *Diary*:—

Words cannot do justice to Hook's talent for improvisation: it was perfectly wonderful.

One of his memorable flights was on meeting Coleridge in a party at Highgate: while the Ancient Mariner brewed the punch, Hook, at the piano, burst forth—every line having reference to the author of the *Lay Sermons*, and the *Aids to Reflection*.

The room was becoming excessively hot: the first specimen of the punch was handed to Hook, who paused to quaff it, and then, exclaiming that he was stifled, flung his glass through the window. Coleridge * rose, with the aspect of a benignant patriarch, and demolished another pane: the example was followed generally; the window was a wreck in an instant; the kind host was farthest from his mark, and his goblet made havoc of the chandelier. The roar of laughter subsided on Theodore's resumption of the song, and window and chandelier, and the peculiar shot of each individual destroyer, were wondrously commemorated. This is described as a remarkably witty display: it certainly must have been *improvised*, since the destructive climax could not have been foreseen or anticipated.

* Coleridge, undoubtedly, refers to Hook, in his *Introduction to Greek Classic Poets*, p. 36, where he says: "A noted English wit of the day can improvise in rhyme, even in our language, as long as you please to listen to his amusing exhibition."

HOAXES.

Sheridan, as we have seen in the present volume, had a great taste, we may say, constructive skill, in *hoaxing;* but he is far exceeded by Hook. The reader will recollect in *Gilbert Gurney* the episode of his rowing with a friend (Mathews,) when they read a painted board in a garden at Barnes, "Nobody permitted to land here. Offenders prosecuted with the utmost Rigour of the Law." But the comedians resolved to disembark: so, taking the fishing as a surveyor's line, Hook, pencil and book in hand, and Mathews, as clerk, with the cord and walking-stick, landed, and began to pace the lawn in front of a beautiful villa: the dining-room window was thrown up, and forth came an irritated gentleman from his dinner, inquiring how the trespassers dare invade his territory. Their reply was cool and business-like: they, by degrees, communicated to the indignant old gentleman the pleasant intelligence that they had come to settle where a new Canal Company were to cut across his pleasant retreat: he grew alarmed, and the intruding officials were "never more pained than with such a duty." "Would they walk in, and talk the matter over?" This they reluctantly did,—an excellent dinner was on the table, they were unnecessarily pressed—they sat down, and enjoyed the repast and its accompaniments, and, over half a dozen of claret, they discussed the line of canal. The wine warmed the host's gratitude—"one bottle more, dear gentlemen"—and it was getting dark, when Hook burst into full extempore song, and explained the whole in this verse:

> And we greatly approve of your fare,
> Your cellar's as prime as your cook;
> And this clerk here is Mathews the player,
> And my name, sir, is—Theodore Hook.

The Rev. Mr. Barham relates the following veritable case: Hook and a friend having borrowed a horse and gig, took a drive in the country, and had reached Ruislip, near Uxbridge, when they bethought them of dining: "Of course, you have money with you?" said Hook: "not a sixpence, not a *sou*," was the reply. Theodore was in the same predicament—the last turnpike having exhausted his supply. "Stay," said Hook, reining up, "do you see that pretty little villa—suppose we dine there?" The suggestion was capital. "You know the owner, then?" inquired he. "Not the least in the world,"

was the reply. "I never saw him in all my life, but that's of no consequence: I know his name, it's E——w, the celebrated chronometer-maker; the man who got the 10,000*l.* premium from Government, and then wound up his affairs, and his watches, and retired from business. He will be delighted to see us." So saying, up he drove to the door, "Is Mr. E——w at home?" Answer: "Yes." In they went. The old gentleman appeared, and after a little staring at each other, Hook began: "Mr. E——w, happening to pass through your neighbourhood, I could not deny myself the pleasure and honour of paying my respects to you: I am conscious that it may seem impertinent, but your ability overcame in me regard for the common forms of society, and I and my friend here were resolved, come what might, to have it in our power to say that we had seen you, and enjoyed, for a few minutes, the company of an individual famous throughout the civilized world."

The old gentleman was caught: shaking of hands, and a few more compliments followed, and presently the remark, "But, gentlemen, you are far from town—it's getting late, pray do me the honour of staying and dining, quite as we say in the family way—now, pray gentlemen, do stay."

The two visitors consulted gravely—it was impossible—they must return to town, Hook adding a little more compliment, which elicited a still more pressing invitation from the chronometer-maker. At length, they agreed to stay and dine, and join in a bottle of "Barnes's best." The dinner despatched, the bottle was multiplied by six; the host was as happy as a king, and would not allow his new friends to depart without a pledge to repeat their visit.

Another hoax, printed in the *Life of Thomas Ingoldsby*, is thus racily narrated:

Hook was present at Lord Melville's Trial, with a friend. They went early, and when the peers began to enter, a country lady touched Theodore's arm, and said, "I beg your pardon, sir, but pray who are those gentlemen in red now coming in?" "Those, ma'am," returned Hook, "are the Barons of England; in these cases the junior peers always come first." The lady thanked him, and repeated the information to her daughter, who asked, "Dear me, ma, can that gentleman be one of the youngest? I am sure he looks very old." "Human nature," added Hook, "could not stand this: any one, though with no more mischief in him than a dove, must have been excited to a hoax." "And pray, sir," continued the lady, "what gentlemen are those?" pointing to the bishops who came next in order in scarlet, and lawn sleeves, over their doctors' robes. "Gentlemen! ma'am," said Hook, "these are not gen-

tlemen; these are *ladies*, elderly ladies—the dowager peeresses in their own right." The fair inquirer fixed a penetrating glance upon his countenance, saying, "Are you quizzing me or no?" Not a muscle moved, and the lady told her daughter not to forget *that*. The Speaker of the House of Commons, in his richly embroidered robe, came next. "Pray, sir," said she, "who is that fine-looking person opposite?" "That, madam," was the answer, "is Cardinal Wolsey." "No, sir," cried the lady, drawing herself up, and casting at her informant a look of angry disdain, "we knows a little better than that; Cardinal Wolsey has been dead many a good year." "No such thing, my dear madam, I assure you," replied Hook, with a gravity that must have been almost preternatural; "it has been, I know, so reported in the country, but without the least foundation; in fact, those rascally newspapers will say anything." The good old gentlewoman appeared thunderstruck, opened her eyes to their full extent, and gasped like a dying carp; and then hurried from the spot.

TOM HILL.

One of Hook's early friends was Mr. Thomas Hill, the Hull of *Gilbert Gurney*, and the undoubted original of *Paul Pry*, whose humours Theodore has so minutely told: the chapters in which they are narrated were read to Hill, who interrupted ever and anon with, "Oh! Hook, what a memory you have! All true; every word correct!"

Every reader of *Gurney* will recollect the noisy party at Hill's cottage at Sydenham; the introduction to the Sheriff, with "fishy eyes," the invitation to eat marrow-puddings, and the excellent account of the Old Bailey dinners. Then, the invitation to attend the execution—"We hang at eight, breakfast at nine, sir." (The author of the *Quarterly* Sketch adds a touching anecdote, see page 25.)

Mr. Hill, to borrow from Hook's portrait of him, happened to know everything that was going forward in all circles—mercantile, political, fashionable, literary, or theatrical; in addition to all matters connected with military and naval affairs, agriculture, finance, art, and science—everything came alike to him. Such a man was, of course, sure of success as a "collector" of literary curiosities. Even while in business as a drysalter at the unlettered Queenhithe, he found leisure to accumulate a fine collection of old books, chiefly old poetry, which afterwards, when misfortunes overtook him, was valued at six thousand pounds. Hill was likewise a Mecænas: he patronised two friendless poets—Bloomfield and Kirke White. The *Farmer's Boy* of the former was read and admired by him in manuscript, and was recom-

mended to a publisher; after which, Hill rendered very essential service to its success by talking in society of its merits. Mr. Hill established, also, the *Monthly Mirror*, which brought him much into connexion with dramatic poets, actors, and managers. To this periodical work, Kirke White became a contributor; and this encouragement induced him, about the close of the year 1802, to commit a little volume of poetry to the press. Mr. Southey, in his *Life of Kirke White*, refers to Mr. Hill as possessing one of the most copious collections of English poetry in existence.

Hill died December 20, 1840, at his chambers in the Adelphi, aged 81. Hook and his friends made him out a Methuselah. James Smith once said that it was impossible to discover his age, for the parish-register had been burnt in the great Fire of London; but Hook capped this with "Pooh! pooh! He's one of the little Hills that are spoken of as skipping in the Psalms."

We incline rather to attribute this rare instance of convivial long life to Hill's *gaiété de cœur*, to his healthy mind, and to the current of benevolence that constituted his life-blood, and the genial warmth of sentiment that shone round his very heart. He enjoyed the appellation of "the Merry Bachelor;" but he was merry and wise. Yet his life was chequered with adversity: it had its cares and crosses: he was, for many years, extensively engaged in business; but, about the year 1810, having sustained a severe loss by a speculation in indigo, he retired upon the remains of his property. He died from a severe cold taken in a damp bed at Rouen, during the autumn, from which he never rallied. "He expired without a struggle, breathing his last as if falling into a tranquil slumber. His death was but the quiet repose of exhausted nature; but her works were worn out, and ceased to act. His physician's remark to him was, 'I can do no more for you—I have done all I can. I cannot cure age.'"

How he attained this longevity is hard to decide; but we are informed that his hospitality was well regulated; that he did not, like Bannister, sit up at nights to watch his constitution; but that he was a remarkably early riser.

After his death, his collection of curiosities were sold by auction by Evans, in Pall Mall: they consisted principally of autograph letters, mostly theatrical; two cups formed from Shakspeare's mulberry-tree at Stratford; a slip of Pope's willow, &c.

Nothing can be more exact than the description of him in *Gurney:* "He was plump, short, with an intelligent countenance, and near-sighted, with a constitution and complexion fresh enough to look forty." Among the jokes on his antiquity, which he greatly enjoyed, and Hook almost thought, believed, was—that he sold gunpowder to King Charles II., and dined more than once with the witty Lord Rochester."

PORSON, HOOK, AND HILL.

In the collection of Tom Hill's curiosities were a few autographs of Porson and Hook.

First was the MS. *Out of the Frying-pan into the Fire*, the farce which Porson wrote at Eton, and which he presented to Miss Lunan, daughter of Porson's wife by her first husband, and niece of Perry. The farce was acted at Eton by Dr. Goodall and Porson's schoolfellows, Porson himself performing Punch. The MS. fetched 10*l.* 15*s.*

Next was a letter from Mr. F. Broderip, informing Hill he had obtained information of the performers in Porson's drama, from Mr. Richards, an old Etonian, which letter he incloses. It consists of four quarto pages, and gives curious biographical notices of all the performers: it is the composition of Mr. Theodore Hook, and is an admirable specimen of grave irony. A second letter of Mr. Broderip apologises for the hoax practised on Mr. Hill, and confesses the letter of Mr. Richards to be the production of Mr. Hill's creative imagination.

Next was a singular letter to Porson from an anonymous Correspondent, begging he will wear the two waistcoats which accompany this note. Also, a note from Theodore Hook, inviting Mr. Hill to Richmond: "Please to recollect that tide waits for no man, and time for no man—but you; do not say Pooh! pooh! but come."

PAYING A COACH-FARE.

Hook seems to have paraphrased Sheridan's trick of calling his friend Richardson, whom he saw in the street, into a hackney-coach, then getting into a quarrel with him, and getting out of the coach, leaving Richardson to pay Sheridan's morning's fare. Theodore found himself without money, after a long ride—a friend was passing, he was hailed and taken into the coach,—but neither had any money. Hook pulled the check-string, and desired to be driven to No. —, —— street, at the west end of the town, the residence of a well-known surgeon. On arriving there, he inquired, "Mr. ——, is he at home? I must see him immediately." Mr. —— soon appeared, when Hook, in an agitated and hurried tone, begged his attendance *instantly* required by Mrs. S——, No.— "pray lose not a moment." "I will start directly," replied the medical man, "I have only to run upstairs, and get my

apparatus, and step into my carriage." "Ah! exactly, returned Hook, "but I am in agony till I fairly see you off—don't think of ordering out your own carriage; here's one at the door, jump into that." This he did, and was soon at the house directed, the abode of a stiff-mannered maiden lady, to whom Hook owed a grudge. The doctor was admitted—the lady was infuriated, and he was glad to escape into the coach, which deposited him at his door—with his own fare, *and that of Hook*, to defray.

THE BERNERS-STREET HOAX.

The frolic at Barnes which we have described at page 239, is small game in comparison with what may be termed a stupendous hoax played off by Hook, in 1810, upon the quiet occupant of the house, No. 54, in Berners-street, Oxford-street. It is slightly told in *Gilbert Gurney*, but more in detail by the *Quarterly* Reviewer, who relates that Hook and a companion (Mathews or Beazeley) were one day walking down Berners-street, when Theodore's attention was called to the particularly neat and modest appearance of a house, the residence, as was inferred from the door-plate, of some decent shopkeeper's widow. "I lay you a guinea," said Hook, "that in one week that nice, quiet dwelling shall be the most famous in all London." The bet was taken: in the course of four or five days Hook had written and despatched *one thousand* letters, conveying orders to tradesmen of every sort within the bills of mortality, all to be executed on one particular day, and as nearly as possible, at one fixed hour. From waggons of coals and potatoes, (says Gurney), to books, prints, feathers, ices, jellies, and cranberry-tarts—nothing in any way whatever available to any human being, but was commanded from scores of rival dealers, scattered over our *province of bricks*, from Whitechapel to Paddington. In 1809 (1810?), Oxford-road was not approachable either from Westminster, or from the city, otherwise than through a complicated series of lanes. It may be fully and afar off be guessed what the crash and jam and tumult of that day was.

"Hook had provided himself with a lodging nearly opposite the fated No. 54; and there, with a couple of trusty allies, he watched the development of his midday melodrame. He had no objection to bodying forth the arrival of the Lord Mayor and his chaplain, invited to take the death-bed con-

fession of a penitential common councilman; but he would rather have buried in oblivion that no less liberty was taken with the Governor of the Bank, the Chairman of the East India Company, a Lord Chief Justice, a Cabinet Minister; above all with the Archbishop of Canterbury, and His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief.* They all obeyed the summons—every pious and patriotic feeling had been most movingly appealed to. We are not sure that they all reached Berners-street; but the Duke of York's military punctuality and crimson liveries brought him to the point of attack before the poor widow's astonishment had risen to terror and despair.

"Perhaps, no assassination, no conspiracy, no royal demise, or ministerial revolution of recent times, was a greater God-send to the newspapers than this audacious piece of mischief. In Hook's own theatrical world, he was instantly suspected—but no sign escaped either him or his confidants. The affair was beyond that circle a serious one. Fierce were the growlings of the doctors and surgeons, scores of whom had been cheated of valuable hours. Attorneys, teachers of all kinds, male and female, hair-dressers, tailors, popular preachers, parliamentary philanthropists, had been alike victimised—and were in their various notes alike vociferous. But the tangible material damage done was itself no joking matter. There had been an awful smashing of glass, china, harpsichords, and coach-panels. Many a horse fell, never to rise again. Beer-barrels and wine-barrels had been overturned, and exhausted with impunity amid the press of countless multitudes. It had been a fine field-day for the pickpockets. There arose a fervent hue and cry for the detection of the wholesale deceiver and destroyer."—Sketch from the *Quarterly Review*, No. 143, p. 62.

It is said that Mr. Theodore found it convenient to be laid up for a week or two, and then promoted convalescence by a country tour. By and by the storm blew over, and the Great Unknown re-appeared with tranquillity in the green-room.

The lady on whom the hoax was played was Mrs. Tottingham.

* The Rev. Mr. Barham, in his *Life and Remains* of Hook, states this to have been the Duke of Gloucester, with his equerry, to receive a communication from a dying woman, formerly a confidential attendant on His Royal Highness' mother. The Duke of York, Mr. Barham believes, was not included in the hoax.

The following modified account of the hoax appeared in one of the newspapers of the next day:

This very malignant species of wit was yesterday most successfully practised at the house of Mrs. T——, a lady of fortune, at No. 54, Berners-street, which was beset by about a dozen tradespeople at one time, with their various commodities, and from the confusion altogether, such crowds had collected, as to render the street impassible. Waggons laden with coals from the Paddington wharves, upholsterers' goods in cart-loads, organs, pianofortes, linen, jewellery, and every other description of furniture, were lodged as near as possible to the door of No. 54, with anxious tradespeople and a laughing mob. About this time, the Lord Mayor arrived in his carriage, but his Lordship's stay was short, and he was driven to Marlborough-street Police-office. At the office his Lordship informed the sitting magistrate that he had received a note, purporting to come from Mrs. T——, which stated that she had been summoned to appear before him, but that she was confined to her room by sickness, and requested his Lordship would do her the favour to call on her. The officers at Marlborough-street were immediately sent to keep order. The first thing witnessed by them was six stout men bearing an organ, surrounded by wine-porters with permits, barbers with wigs, manteau-makers with bandboxes, opticians with various articles of their trade, * * * The street was not cleared at a late hour, as servants wanting places began to assemble at five o'clock. This hoax exceeded by far that in Bedford-street a few months since; for, besides a coffin which was brought to Mrs. T——'s house, made to measure, agreeable to letter, five feet six by sixteen inches, there were accoucheurs, tooth-drawers, miniature-painters, and artists of every description."

Hook was disgusted with the numerous imitations which followed this hoax: he makes Daly, *Gurney's* double, say: "Copy the joke, and it ceases to *be* one—any fool can imitate an example once set: but for originality of thought and design I do think that was perfect."

In the next year, Hook played another hoax, but upon a single sufferer, and this no less a person than Romeo Coates. The Prince Regent was about to give a magnificent fête at Carlton House, on June 19, to 2,000 guests; when Theodore contrived to imitate one of the Chamberlain's tickets, and to produce a fac-simile, commanding the presence of Coates: he then put on a scarlet uniform, and delivered the card himself. On the night of the fête, Hook stationed himself by the screen at Carlton House, and saw Romeo arrive and enter the palace; he passed in without question, but the imposture was detected by the Private Secretary, and Coates had to retrace his steps to the street, and, his carriage being driven off, to get home in a hackney-coach. When the Prince was informed of what had occurred, he signified his regret at the course the Secretary

had taken; and he was sent by the Prince to apologise in person, and invite Coates to come and look at the state-rooms; and Romeo went.

Mrs. Mathews details several other hoaxes practised by Hook; but they lose much of their interest in print: to hear him *tell* them, with eye, tone, and gesture, was irresistible.

INTRODUCED TO THE PRINCE REGENT.

Hook's improvisation and other social gaieties having reached the ears of the Marchioness of Hertford in Manchester-square; Theodore was called upon to contribute to the amusement of the Regent at a supper at Hertford House. He was presented to the Prince, when his awe was terrible; but he recovered and much delighted his Royal Highness, who, as Theodore was leaving the room, laid his hand on his shoulder, and said, "Mr. Hook, I must see and hear you again." Similar evenings followed at Lady Hertford's; the Regent made inquiry about Hook's position, and finding that he was without profession, or fixed income, signified his opinion that "something must be done for Hook."—*Quarterly Review.*

Hook's pictures of high society are full of reality, for he had a store of experiences. The names are generally changed: in *Gurney*, the Countess of Wolverhampton is from what actually occurred at Lady Buckinghamshire's—including the bullock changed for the cow—the ducal supper devoured by the Pandeans—and the drugged macaroons, copied from an incident which actually occurred, we believe, at Naples.

HOOK AND BEAZELEY.

At this period, one of Hook's associates was the late Samuel Beazeley, the architect and dramatist, and the *Daly* of *Gilbert Gurney;* who, in 1804, describes Hook's workshop to have been the little back drawing-room—"tables, chairs, mantelpiece, piano, all covered with letters, MS. music, French plays, notes, tickets, rhyming dictionaries, &c. Already, his oddity could not be restrained in society; he was intensely loyal; and if, during dinner, a street-organ played *God save the King*, he would insist on everybody standing up, lead the chorus, and not sit down till the anthem was closed.

In *Gurney*, when Theodore had achieved great things, he tells us how he set to work in this theatrical manufacture, filching incidents from four French vaudevilles, and by

his own tact amalgamating them into a comic opera. Hook was very fortunate in having both Mathews and Liston in his earliest dramas: the disguises and rattle of the one, and the stolid drollery of the other, insured almost any piece. One of Liston's songs in the *Soldier's Return* was long popular:

I sing the love, the smiling love,
Of Clutterbuck and Higginbottom.

HOOK AND COLMAN.

George Colman, the younger, was an early associate of Theodore. On the first evening they met, they had been sitting some time, when Colman, fixing his eyes upon Hook, and sipping anon from his glass, muttered, "Very odd, very strange indeed! wonderful precocity of genius! astonishing diligence and assiduity! You must be a very extraordinary young man. Why, sir," he continued, raising his voice, "you can hardly yet have reached your twenty-first birth-day?"—"I have just passed it," said the other, "*vingt-un* overdrawn." "Ah! very good," replied Colman; "but, sir, pray tell me, how the d—l did you contrive to find time to write that terribly long *Roman History?*"

STREET PASTIMES.

Half a century ago, when the *signs* which had been spared to the metropolis were left to the guardianship of somnolent watchmen, to carry off these street insignia was a pastime thought worthy of the man-about-town. Theodore seems to have participated largely in this species of fun, if we may trust the *spolia opima*—the collection of knockers, bunches of grapes, barbers' poles, cocked hats, gilt eagles, and sign-boards—which he termed his museum. Among his adventures, was the carrying off a gigantic Highlander from a tobacconist's door, and huddling him into a hackney-coach as a friend "a little tipsy," and thus bearing off the wooden Scot. He had a competitor in this line, over whom he gained a victory, by serving up at dinner a huge gilt eagle, from a neighbouring street, but thought to be unattainable. These freaks are of date long anterior to the notoriety which such amusements obtained as the spirit of "Life in London."

His street fun was irrepressible at this time; and we read of his walking up to a pompous person in the *trottoir* in the

Strand, and saying to him, "I beg your pardon, sir, but may I ask, *are you anybody particular?*"—but he did not wait for the answer of the magnifico.

PROPERTY OF A PUN.

Hook had for the wit of George Colman a respect bordering on fear, and he rarely ventured to enter the lists with him. Mr. Barham relates that with a spice of revenge, Hook fathered upon Colman a *bon-mot*, which he H. had the grace to disclaim: on the death of Mrs. Wall, the actress, being announced, he observed, "Well, I suppose then by this time she is stuck all over with bills,—this is the way they serve all the *dead walls* about London." Colman has always had the credit, or rather, the discredit, of this pun.

HOOK AN "ECCENTRIC."

Late in the last century there met, at a tavern kept by one Fulham, in Chandos-street, Covent-garden, a convivial club called "The Eccentrics," which was an offshoot of "The Brilliants." They next removed to Tom Rees's, in May's-buildings, St. Martin's-lane, and here they were flourishing, at all hours, some twenty years since. The club at present meets at the Green Dragon tavern in Fleet-street; and seven years ago, it comprised among its members many celebrities of the literary and political world.

Since its commencement this club has numbered upwards of 40,000 members of the *bon-vivants* of the metropolis, many of them holding a high social position: among others, Fox, Sheridan, Lord Melbourne, and Lord Brougham may be mentioned. On the same memorable night that Sheridan and Lord Petersham were admitted, Hook was also enrolled; and through this club-membership, Theodore is believed to have obtained some of his high connexions.

A MEMORY CONTEST.

Among Hook's early acquaintance was the Rev. Edward Cannon, one of the chaplains to the Prince Regent, and in high favour at Carlton House, but he lost the royal favour through his plain speaking. He is the Godfrey Moss of Hook's *Maxwell*. Now, Hook had a remarkable memory: he once undertook to repeat in proper order all the names of the

shopkeepers on one side of Oxford-street, of which he omitted but one; and again, he quite succeeded in running over, after a single perusal, the whole list of advertisements in the *Times* newspaper. Once, with the assistance of Cannon, this faculty was most amusingly developed by Hook at the table of a dictatorial friend. Theodore selected as a subject, the Precession of the Equinoxes; and from the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, learned the entire article, a very long one, by heart, without stopping to comprehend a single sentence. As previously arranged, Cannon led the conversation round to the desired point, and, on a sudden pause, drew the attention of the company upon the host, whom he had contrived to entangle in the topic. The entertainer started another question, but Hook returned to the charge, saying, "My dear sir, you do not seem to have explained the matter:" everybody, of course, is aware that "the most obvious of all the celestial motions is the diurnal revolution of the starry heavens," &c. and then followed a couple of columns from the Encyclopædia article. "But," continued he, "you can, doubtless, put the thing in a much clearer light: I confess the mutation of the axis, &c. is a little beyond me." The joke now became obvious; others pursued it, and the victim was overwhelmed by inquiries relating to "the parallax of the earth's orbit," "disturbing force and matter of the moon," &c. till the posed host was compelled to throw himself on the mercy of the foe.

Cannon was sometimes severe upon Hook himself. The latter having expressed a conviction that dreams were not mere objectless workings of the brain, but that signs and meanings were conveyed to man by their medium,—"See what it is to be a wit," replied Cannon, "you will believe, my Hookums, anything you ought not, and nothing that you ought."

FIGHTS A DUEL.

Hook's contempt for dancing and dancers when a young man, (which is almost as remarkable as his subsequent antipathy to the stage,) involved him in a quarrel with no less a personage than the well-known General Thornton, (the original, it is said, of Mathews's *Major Longbow*,) from which he extricated himself with *éclat*. He had let fall, it appears, at an assembly, some expressions derogatory to dancing, to which the General, who was himself waltzing most vigorously,

and accidentally overhearing him, replied in terms of uncalled-for personality. "The latter," says Mr. Barham, who relates the incident, "was, in consequence, compelled by Theodore to quit the apartment, but he thought fit speedily to return and resume the dance without taking further notice of the affront. Such conduct, whatever might have been its motive, not unnaturally led to a demonstration of surprise on the part of the other, which rendered further forbearance impossible. The General was compelled to demand a species of *satisfaction*, which was very readily accorded: the parties met, Hook attended by a worthy baronet, and exchanged shots, without other effect than to elicit the fullest approbation of the courage and self-possession of the youthful combatant; so youthful in feelings as well as in years, that while the *salons* of London were resounding with praises of his gallantry, he was busily engaged in mock renewals of the fight with his brother's children, beneath the walnut-trees of Hertingfordbury."

FIVE YEARS IN THE MAURITIUS.

Towards the close of 1812, when Hook's income was mainly realised by writing for the stage—at the best, a very precarious dependence—he received the appointment of Accountant-General and Treasurer at the Mauritius, worth nearly 2,000*l.* per annum. He is thought to have been indebted for this piece of good fortune to the Regent's remembrance of his intimation—that something must be done for Hook; conjoined with the circumstance that the Governor of the colony was then General Sir R. Farquhar, whose daughter was married to Dr. James Hook.

Theodore arrived at the Mauritius on the 9th of October, 1813, being then only twenty-five years of age. He was encouragingly received at Port Louis, where his convivial qualities and agreeable manners soon made him as welcome as he had been in the London circles. The only glimpse we obtain of his life in this paradise of an island, and not without angels, is from a letter to his old friend Mathews, after he had been settled there about two years. "You have read enough," he writes, "of this island not to imagine that we live in huts on the sea-coast, or that, like our gallant fathers, we paint ourselves blue, and vote pantaloons a prejudice. The whole island is like fairy-land; every hour seems happier

than the last; the mildness of the air, (the sweetness of which, as it passes over spice-plantations and orange-groves, is hardly conceivable,) the clearness of the atmosphere, the coolness of the evenings, and the loveliness of the place itself, all combine to render it fascination."

The round of his gay life is thus sketched: "We have operas in the winter, which sets in about July; our races, too, begin in July; we have an excellent beefsteak club, and the best Freemasons' lodge in the world. We have subscription concerts, and balls, and the parties in private houses here are seldom less than from two to three hundred. At the last ball given at the Government-house upwards of seven hundred and fifty ladies were present, which, considering that the greater proportion of the female population are *not admissible*, proves the number of inhabitants and the extent of the society.

"I dare say some of my fat-headed friends in that little island where the beef grows fancy that I am making a fortune, considering that I am Treasurer! and Accountant-General! Fresh butter, my dear fellow, is ten shillings per pound; a coat costs thirty pounds English; a pair of gloves fifteen shillings; a bottle of claret, the best, ten-pence; and pine-apples a penny a piece. Thus, you see, while the articles necessary to existence are exorbitant, luxuries are dirt cheap —and a pretty life we do lead. Breakfast at eight, always up by gun-fire, five o'clock; bathe and ride before breakfast —after breakfast lounge about; at one have a regular meal, yclep'd a tiffin—hot meats, vegetables, &c.—and at this we sit generally through the heat of the day, drinking our wine and munching our fruit; at five, or half-past, the carriages come to the door, and we go either in them or in palanquins to dress, which operation performed, we drive out to the race-ground, and through the Champ de Mars, the Hyde Park here, till half-past six; come into town, and at seven dine, where we remain till ten or eleven, and then join the French parties, as there is regularly a ball somewhere or other every night: these things, blended with business, make out the day and evening."

The courses of a luxurious *tiffin* are admirably sketched by Hook, from his own table, the company being a party of sight-seeing acquaintances whom Theodore had accompanied round Port Louis. They took their seats with a sharp appetite for the far-famed delicacies of the island. An enormous

gourd graced the centre of the table; strange dishes were placed around, and in turn pressed upon the attention of the guests. "Allow me to offer you a little cat-curry," exclaimed the host; "there is an absurd prejudice against these things in Europe, I know, but *this* I really can recommend; or, perhaps, you would prefer a little devilled monkey: that is, I believe, a dish of fried snakes opposite you, Mr. J——." Mr. J—— recoiled in alarm. "Hand these lizards round, they seem particularly fine." This was a native course; though the company could scarcely keep their ground before such savoury abominations. What was to be done? It was clearly the *cuisine de pays*, and the host appeared distressed. One gentleman, at length, in sheer despair, thought he would just try a lizard. "Pray do," eagerly returned Hook; "you will find the flavour a little peculiar at first, I dare say; but it is astonishing how soon it becomes pleasant to the palate." The guest endeavoured to help himself to one of these unpromising dainties, but the tail becoming separated from its body, it was too much for his nerves, and, turning pale, he begged to be excused. However, this was all in jest: the second course consisted of such choice viands as the company heartily enjoyed.

Upon another occasion Theodore let off one of the great guns of his humour with great effect. A public dinner was given at the Government House, at which the Governor himself, confined by ill health, was unable to preside. The officer next in rank, therefore, filled the chair, but was taken ill, and compelled to quit the banquet at an early hour. The task of succeeding the chair, and proposing the remainder of the loyal and usual toasts, now devolved on Hook; and, as each separate health was given and duly signalled, it was responded to by an immediate salute from a battery in the square below, according to special orders. The appointed list having been drunk, the chairman did not feel disposed to retire, but begged gentlemen to "fill their glasses, and drink a bumper to that gallant and distinguished officer, Captain Dobbs"—up went the signal—bang! bang! bang! roared the artillery. "Lieutenant Hobbs" followed with the same result. "Ensign Snobbs," and bang! bang! bang! greeted his name. Quick as the guns could be re-loaded, up again went the signal, and off went his Majesty's twenty-fours, to the honour, successively, of every individual present, soldier or civilian. In vain, the subaltern on duty, who had ex-

pected at the termination of the accustomed formalities to be permitted to join the party, sent up a remonstrance. The directions he had received were imperative. Such a bombardment had not been heard since the capture of the island; and it was not till the noisy compliment had been paid to the cook and scullion, who were summoned from the kitchen to return thanks, and the powder was all expended, as well as the patience of the gunners, that the firing ceased. A reprimand was talked of, but ended like the noisy honours—in smoke.

This was exciting life for a man of Hook's temperament; and had he possessed any remarkable business habits, or qualification for his official duties, these delights would have led him to neglect them. But he had little of such aptitude, and the duties were delegated to subordinate officers in such a manner as to make it difficult to fix upon their responsibility. Hook became a leading man on the Turf, and mentions his money successes in that lure to ruin. In such a land of luxury his own hospitality knew no bounds; for with his social accomplishments the joys of the feast were complete. In after years he did not forget this gayest period of his life, but transferred many a portrait from the Mauritius to his *Sayings and Doings*, and novels of later date.

Late in 1817, General Farquhar, the Governor, to recruit his health, sailed for England, and Major-General Hall was sworn in Deputy-Governor. An examination of the state of the accounts and the Treasury took place, and the Report of the examiners declared the books and chest to be in their proper state. Soon afterwards, however, a clerk named Allan, in the Treasury office, made a declaration that he knew and had long known that there was a deficiency of 37,000 dollars, which had been paid in at the Treasury some fifteen months before. Further investigations took place, and Allan was examined for several successive days; while in letters he asserted that he had long concealed his knowledge of the deficiency fearing to bring himself into collision with the Treasurer. His letters were strangely written; and one morning, just before the Commissioners met, Allan shot himself: his last letter alleged that he had been tampered with by Hook, who offered him twenty-five dollars per month, if he would quit the Mauritius, and never re-appear there; but the whole of his story was disproved before the Commissioners. However, other evidence proved there to be nume-

rous omissions and irregularities in the Treasury books. The result was that Hook was arrested on March 9, 1818—taken from a friend's supper-table, and dragged through the streets by torchlight to the common prison. In a few days he was handed over to a military detachment, and embarked with them for England. All his property had been previously seized and sold; and he mentions that, after he was on board ship, a negro slave who had bought at the auction, for ten shillings, Hook's writing-desk, begged his acceptance of it.

The voyage to England occupied nine months: for an entire month they were tossed in a hurricane off the Cape of Good Hope, and for six weeks were reduced to half a pound of mouldy biscuit, and half a pint of water per day. While the vessel was refitting at Cape Town, Hook was allowed to land *en parole*. The ship also stopped a day or two at St. Helena, where Theodore accompanied the officers to Longwood, to be presented to Napoleon. "We have before us," says the able writer of the *Quarterly* sketch, "a clever coloured drawing by him (Hook) of the ante-room at the ex-emperor's levee, which ought to be engraved—it is the best specimen we have seen. A slighter sketch of the great man, *solus*, inscribed 'Fatty, late Boney,' was etched many years ago. It represents a most uncouth obesity, and a dismal sulkiness of visage. Here he encountered the late Lord Charles Somerset, on his way to assume the governorship of the Cape. Lord Charles, who had met him in London occasionally, and knew nothing of his arrest, said, 'I hope you are not going home for your health, Mr. Hook.' 'Why,' said Theodore, 'I am sorry to say, they think there's something wrong in the chest.'"

The ship reached Portsmouth in January, 1819. The documents were submitted to the law-officers of the Crown. The Attorney-general's report was, that Hook might be liable to a civil prosecution for debt, but not for a criminal prosecution. He was, therefore, liberated: he reached London with *two gold mohurs* in his pocket, and was immediately examined by the Audit Board—but the scrutiny lasted five years.

The sad experiences, as well as the brighter phases, of this Mauritius career, are admirably transferred to Hook's novel of *Maxwell;* and it is this wonderful power of clothing his fictions with the actualities of life that lends to his works a permanent value beyond their instant attraction.

THE "JOHN BULL" NEWSPAPER STARTED.

Notwithstanding the weighty Mauritius accusation, Hook's intellectual powers were as active as ever. He settled himself in a small cottage at Somers' Town, where he wrote for the newspapers and magazines, to supply the passing wants of the day. He edited a magazine called the *Arcadian*, but as it did not bring such delights as the name is usually associated with, the publisher soon backed out; but the work is remembered by its having contained a long ballad showing up Holland House. Theodore now saw but a few old friends, as Mathews, Terry, and Tom Hill, the latter having become by reverses as poor as Hook himself.

In the spring of 1820, Sir Walter Scott visited London, and, for the first time, met Hook at dinner, with Terry and Mathews. Terry's account of Theodore and his distresses had much interested Scott, whose warm heart was ever open to the sufferings of a brother author; and this interest was not lessened by Hook having, in the teeth of the Audit Board persecutions, been mindful of his personal obligations to the sovereign, and openly opposed to the pretensions and partisans of Queen Caroline.

Soon after the above meeting, Sir Walter Scott was asked by a nobleman of influence, who enjoyed the confidence of George IV., if he could find at Edinburgh some fit person to undertake the editorship of a county newspaper about to be established in an English town. Sir Walter at once suggested Hook: for some time he heard no more of the county paper; but towards the close of the year appeared the *John Bull*, with Hook for its editor. The title, it appears, had been, in a measure, pre-engaged by Elliston, who had projected, with Theodore, establishing a paper under that name.* However, Elliston gave way, and the *John Bull* was commenced by Hook in conjunction with Mr. William Shackell, the printer, at Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, who undertook to supply the funds, and take all hazards; Hook being the editor; and the profits to be divided equally between them.

* It well bespeaks the changeful spirit of the last thirty years, that three of the principal personages who fought this stout battle have been signally honoured in their time. Alderman Wood received from Queen Victoria a baronetcy; and one of his sons is a Vice-Chancellor; Brougham, (Queen Caroline's Attorney-General,) has been Lord Chancellor; and Mr. Denman (her Majesty's Solicitor-General,) Lord Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench.

It is not, we believe, denied, that early in the undertaking, Hook received many contributions to the paper, and from persons in high life, and men of acknowledged ability. The main political object of the journal was well-known and understood—it being to meet, by various means of exposure, those hot-headed persons who made themselves ostensibly the champions of Queen Caroline. Alderman Matthew Wood, and Messrs. Brougham and Denman, were the head and front; and the visitors to Brandenburgh House, and the clergyman who introduced the Queen's name in the Liturgy, received the same castigatory attention. This was, to a certain extent, a bold and determined resentment of the numerous attacks upon the King by the Radical party, especially by an offensive series of caricatures, and doggerel pamphlets, of the virulence of which the reader of the present day can have little idea. *Bull*, undoubtedly, frightened the Whig aristocracy from the court of Brandenburgh House, and this influenced the minds of the decorous middle classes. The parliamentary speeches and votes of the Whig leaders were also dwarfed in the conflict; and the popularity of the Queen was left to the hurrahs of the multitude.

The success of the *John Bull* was immediate. The publisher had only provided 750 stamps for the first number, and was compelled to print several hundred more copies. At the sixth week, the sale had reached 10,000; the early numbers were more than once reprinted, and some were stereotyped; and later, files of the paper realized four, and six times the original price! Meanwhile, it should be explained that the *Bull*, besides its political satire, in quite a new vein, had the recommendation of being an excellent digest of the week's news; and its treatment of public questions had much of the plain, straightforward character which we associate with the *sobriquet* of *John Bull*.

Amidst the fire of personalities, it was necessary to keep the name of the editor a secret; and though proprietors and publishers could, of course, be ascertained, the editor remained for a long time *inconnu;* and when it was first hinted at, *John Bull* (*i.e.* Hook himself,) thus coolly disclaimed the imputation:

MR. THEODORE HOOK.

The conceit of some people is amusing. Our readers will see we have received a letter from *Mr. Hook*, disavowing and disclaiming all connexion with this paper. Partly out of good nature and partly from an anxiety to show this gentleman how little desirous we are to be asso-

ciated with him, we have made a declaration which doubtless will be quite satisfactory to his morbid sensibility and affected squeamishness. We are free to confess that two things surprise us in this business: the first, that anything we have thought worth publishing should have been mistaken for *Mr. Hook;* and secondly, that *such a person as Mr. Hook* should think himself disgraced by a connexion with *John Bull.*

A second notice, which clinched the denial, was as follows:

We have received Mr. Theodore Hook's second letter. We are ready to confess that we may have appeared to treat him too unceremoniously; but we will put it to his own feelings, whether the terms of his denial were not, in some degree, calculated to produce a little asperity on our part; we shall never be ashamed, however, to do justice, and we readily declare that we meant no kind of imputation on Mr. Hook's personal character.

Such a story as the following has been told in several newspaper histories: we believe the incident actually occurred at the office of the *John Bull*, in Johnson's-court, Fleet-street. A gallant colonel, taking amiss some attentions of *Bull*, determined to curb the editor's wit by a smart application of the horsewhip. The colonel went thus prepared to the office, grasping the riding-master's whip of the regiment, and inquired for the editor. He was politely shown into a room, and in a minute or two the editor appeared—a tall, powerful figure, with a thick oak stick under his arm. "What is your business?" he asked. "I wish to see the editor," was the reply. "I am the editor, at your service," said the Brobdignagian representative, fiercely grasping his stick. "Indeed!" ejaculated the colonel, edging towards the door; "oh, another time." "Whenever you please, sir;"—and so they separated.

The lyrical productions of *Bull* have, of course, lost much of their passing point. The following ballad, *The Hunting of the Hare*, shows up the presentation of Addresses to the Queen at Brandenburgh House, which formed one of the most remarkable scenes in the whole affair:

Would you hear of the triumph of purity?
Would you share in the joy of the Queen?
List to my song; and, in perfect security,
Witness a *row* where you durst not have been:
All kinds of Addresses,
From collars of SS.
To venders of cresses,
Came up like a fair;
And all thro' September,
October, November,
And down to December,
They *hunted this Hare.*

* * * * *

Damsels of Marybone, deck'd out in articles
Borrow'd of brokers for shillings and pence—
The eye of vulgarity anything smart tickles;
Drabs love a *ride* at another's expense—
So swarming like loaches,
In ten hackney coaches
They make their approaches
And pull at the bell;
And then they flaunt brave in,
Preceded by CRAVEN,*
And clean and new shaven,
Topographical GELL.†

Next came a motley assemblage of what I call
Mummers and mountebanks, wildly array'd;
Hod-men, and coal-heavers, landmen and nautical,
Tag-rag and bobtail, a strange masquerade!
A rout of sham sailors
Escap'd from their jailors,
As sea-bred as tailors
In Shropshire or Wilts.
But mark Oldi's smile and hers,
Greeting, as Highlanders,
Half a score MILE-ENDERS,
Shivering in kilts!

NOEL‡ and MOORE§ are the pink of her quality,
Judge what must be the more mean partisans!
What sweepings of kennels—what scums of rascality—
Hired and attired to enact artisans;
Sham painters, and stainers,
Smiths, coopers, cordwainers,
And glaziers—chief gainers
In such a turmoil;
Though chandlers and joiners,
And forgers and coiners,
And pocket-purloiners
All share in the spoil.

Verdant green-grocers, all mounted on Jack-asses,
(Lately called *Guildfords*, in honour of FRED.)
Sweet nymphs of Billingsgate, tipsy as Bacchuses,
Roll'd in like porpoises, heels over head!
And the better to charm her,
Three tinkers in armour,
All hired by HARMER,‖
Brave Thistlewood's friend;
Those stout men of metal,
Who think they can settle
The State, if a kettle
They're able to mend.

* The Hon. Keppel Craven, author of a *Tour in Naples*, &c.
† Sir William Gell, author of the *Topography and Antiquities of Pompeii*. ‡ Sir Gerard Noël, Bart. M.P. § Mr. Peter Moore, M.P.
‖ Mr. Harmer (afterwards Alderman), solicitor, of Hatton Garden.

Next come the PRESENTS—Whitechapel (where Jews bury)
Sends needles to hem Dr. FELLOWES'S * lawn;
Cracknels from Cowes—sweet simnels from Shrewsbury—
Rump-steaks from Dublin—and collars of brawn—
A pig—and a blanket—
A sturgeon from Stangate—
The donors all thank-ed
By royal desire!
Old PARR † gave his benison
To PARKINS'S ‡ venison—
But the pamphlet of TENNYSON §
He threw in the fire, &c. &c.

We do not care to rake up any more of these lyrics further than to quote two or three from a song of thirty-one stanzas, called "Mrs. Muggins' Visit to the Queen," which are in the manner of a good idea of those songs which Hook used to improvise with rare success :—

Have you been to Brandenburgh, heigh, ma'am, ho, ma'am?
Have you been to Brandenburgh, ho?
O yes, I have been, ma'am, to visit the Queen, ma'am,
With the rest of the gallantee show, show—
With the rest of the gallantee show.

And who were the company, heigh, ma'am, ho, ma'am?
Who were the company, ho?—
We happened to drop in with gemmen from Wapping
And ladies from Blowbladder-row, row—
Ladies from Blowbladder-row.

What saw you at Brandenburgh, heigh, ma'am, ho, ma'am?
What saw you at Brandenburgh, ho?—
We saw a great dame, with a face red as flame,
And a character spotless as snow, snow—
A character spotless as snow.

The newspaper, for many years, yielded Mr. Hook 2,000*l.* per annum, and the other proprietors a like profit. It was proposed to issue a volume of selections from the paper, to be called *Bull's Mouth*, some portion of which was printed, but not published. Besides the virulent satire of the Queen, there was a more generally amusing class of papers; such as "Mrs. Ramsbottom's Letters," full of capital things to laugh at, and famous specimens of ludicrous *étourderie*, produced several years before Thomas Hood appeared in the comic

* The Rev. Dr. Fellowes, chaplain to Queen Caroline, and reputed to have written the answers to the Addresses presented to the Queen.
† The Rev. Samuel Parr, D.D. vicar of Hatton.
‡ Joseph Wilfrid Parkins, ex-sheriff of London and Middlesex.
§ Mr. Tennyson, M.P.

horizon. Still, the death of Queen Caroline modified the profit as well as the pungency of *Bull:* and its puns, attributed to Samuel Rogers, and pellets fired at Grey Bennett and Joseph Hume, Humanity Dick Martin, and others, fell short of the attraction of the grand object with which the paper was originally established. Then the public taste for satire of this kind dropped: the success of *Bull* (as usual in such cases) had brought out imitators, and the second-rate article created disgust at the entire system of personality. Hook continued to edit *John Bull* until his death, though the proprietorship had passed into other hands. The paper is, to the present day, a Conservative organ; ably conducted; and its digest of the week's news is well executed. It has a good Club circulation.

THE MAURITIUS CASE.

It could not be expected that Hook's fearless attack of the Whigs would procure him any merciful consideration in that quarter; and the Mauritius claim hung, like the sword of Damocles, over the devoted head of the defaulter. At length the suspending hair was cut, and the award given, late in 1823, pronounced him a debtor to the Crown for 12,000*l.* Of this Hook had admitted 9,000*l.* from a very early date; and he maintained, to his last hour, that a just scrutiny must have struck 3,000*l.* from the account. The deficiency is believed to have arisen from trusting too much to the honesty and regularity of inferior officers in the treasury at the Mauritius, and to the negligent manner in which the entries were made in the books: some of the blunders were, indeed, allowed by the Commissioners. It could not be proved that Hook had expended the money, and the suspicion—common in such cases—was that he had gambled; but of this there was no evidence. He had remitted a considerable sum to England, to pay old debts; but this he was proved to have borrowed from a Mauritius merchant, and paid off by instalments. The entire case is clearly put in seven pages of the *Quarterly* sketch, to which the reader is referred. That there had been gross mismanagement in entrusting even the keys of the treasury-chest to all sorts of persons is evident; whereas it is nowhere shown that Hook had acted a criminal part, so as to justify the severity of the proceedings against him. He was arrested in August, 1823; what little property he pos-

sessed was sold; while he was taken to a spunging-house in Shire-lane, Temple Bar, where he remained until the following Easter.

HOOK AND MAGINN.

Shire-lane was, in James the First's time, called *Rogue-lane*. But it had a better reputation: here lived Sir John Sedley, and here his son, Sir Charles Sedley, the dramatic poet, was born. Here, too, lived Elias Ashmole, the antiquary; and here, at the Trumpet public-house, the *Tatler* met his club; and in the lane, at the house of the pastry-cook, Cristopher Kat, noted for his mutton-pies, originated the Kit-Kat Club, of noblemen and gentlemen, poets, painters, and physicians. What a splendid reputation! But the place, in our time, became reduced to squalid houses of reputations too various to be repeated.

In this murky alley, Hook was shut up in the house of the sheriff's-officer who had arrested him.

It is remarkable in how many cases a great weight of misery, instead of pressing a man down, incites him to greater efforts. Here was Mr. Hook, the delight of dinner-tables and drawing-rooms, confined in a house in which air and light were unknown luxuries; yet, in this wretched place, the editor of the *John Bull* was not only at his usual work, but projecting much more. It was while thus occupied that he became acquainted with Dr. William Maginn, who had come over from Cork to assist in the *John Bull*, and a newly-projected literary journal. He was Hook's nightly visitor, and two spirits of closer kindred could not have met.

William Maginn will be remembered by his many classic, serious, and witty contributions to Blackwood and Fraser's Magazines, and other contemporary periodicals; his Shakspere Papers, in 1837, and his Homeric Ballads, in 1842, will be specially recollected. In 1840, Dr. Maginn announced for publication a selection from the above contributions, to be entitled *Magazine Miscellanies*, of which appeared nine numbers. Many of his productions, when a mere boy, were printed in the Cork journals. The best account of him appears in the *Dublin University Magazine*, vol. xxiii. p. 72. The writer of the *Quarterly* sketch records Sir Robert Peel's generous conduct towards Maginn, who "having always retained the strong feelings of an Irish Orangeman, was one of

those who condemned, with severity, Sir Robert Peel's pro-Catholic policy of 1829." The Doctor assailed the personal motives of Peel in various newspapers and magazines, but especially in rhymes, which are thought to have had the power of Swift's. He had never been personally acquainted with Peel; yet, a few years before Maginn's death, Sir Robert sent, through the writer of the *Quarterly* sketch, a contribution of 100*l.*, with a stipulation for secrecy, to a fund then being raised to relieve Maginn from pressing difficulties. And when the Doctor was near his end, Sir Robert forwarded for his use a similar benefaction of 100*l.* Maginn died in 1842, and is buried in the churchyard of Walton-on-Thames, in Surrey.* "Some years after Dr. Maginn's death, his only son, on attaining the requisite age, received a cadetship in the East Indies from Sir Robert Peel's last Government." —*Note to Sketch*, 4th edit., 1852.

Hook left Shire-lane in April, 1824, after a banquet, for which he improvised a ballad, in the chorus of which he did not spare himself:

> Let him hang with a curse—this atrocious, pernicious
> Scoundrel that emptied the till at Mauritius.

From Shire-lane Hook was removed to the Rules of the King's Bench, (Temple-place,) where he worked hard, in addition to the editorship of the *Bull*, in founding his most profitable fame.

"SAYINGS AND DOINGS."

In 1824, Mr. Hook published the first series of these admirable Tales and Sketches, the title of which he owed to Mr. William Shackell, whose suggestive intelligence proposed that Hook's colonial experiences might be turned to better account than after-dinner entertainment. The design of the work is to illustrate a saying in a short story; and one of the highest recommendations of the work is that the portraits of the heroes are from the life. The first series produced the author 2,000*l.*, and placed him as a novelist only second to Sir Walter Scott. In all, nine volumes appeared, of which Mr. Barham relates: "Such had been the success of the first

* There is no memorial of the precise place of his interment: surely, his genius should not be thus dishonoured.

three volumes, of which no less than 6,000 copies were sold, that, in addition to the original sum, 600*l.*, paid for the copyright, Mr. Colburn, on completing the purchase of the second series for a thousand guineas, very handsomely presented the author with a cheque for 150*l.*, to which he subsequently added another for 200*l.* (Hook's own diary states the whole sum received at 2,000*l.*) In 1829, the third series was published, for which also Mr. Hook received 1,000 guineas."

One of the stories in the latter series—"Gervase Skinner," in which "penny wise and pound foolish" is exemplified, overflows with the richest humour. In the Fugglestone Correspondence, the players are sported with so freely, as to have given offence to Charles Mathews; but a letter from Hook, and a call upon the tetchy comedian, soon set the matter right. We suspect, the great secret of the success of these stories lay in the ingenuity with which belief in the supernatural was inculcated in them by instances which the author unquestionably believed. Indeed, he was more than ordinarily superstitious: in his voyage from the Mauritius, he gravely maintained that he received a visit from the "Flying Dutchman." He declared that when the vessel was in the hurricane off the Cape, and when they were unable to show a rag of canvas, he himself, together with five or six others, actually *saw* a large ship bearing down right in the wind's eye, with all her sails set, and apparently at a distance of not more than half a mile! That she was the ill-omened wanderer of the ocean, Hook had no doubt.

He was, too, a believer in the old "Thirteen to Dinner" superstition, of which Mr. Barham records this corroborative note, by one of Hook's friends: "Dined at ——; we were seated twelve in number, when Hook arrived. He looked at first very black on finding himself the thirteenth, but being told that Y——, the actor, was expected, immediately took his seat, and the evening passed off merrily enough. An anecdote was given in the course of conversation singularly corroborative of the superstition by which Hook was, clearly, at first affected. A party of twelve had just sat down, and one of the guests having observed a vacant chair, was remarking that he should hardly like to be the person destined to occupy that seat, when a tremendous double rap was heard, —the door was thrown open, and Mr. *Fauntleroy* announced, —he was hanged within the year!"

HOOK AND STEPHEN PRICE.

We have already referred to Hook's novel of *Maxwell*, with the character of Godfrey Moss, his friend Cannon.

They had both been dining with Stephen Price, the manager of Drury-lane Theatre, who, suffering from gout, the party broke up early, and all took their departure by 11 o'clock, except Hook and Cannon, who would not take any hint *to go*. At length, Price could bear the pain no longer, and stole off unobserved by his fast friends to bed. Next morning, about nine, his servant entered his bed-room. "Well, sir," said Price, on awaking, "pray, at what time did those gentlemen go, last night?" "Go, sir?" repeated the man. "I asked ye, *sir*, at what time did Mr. Hook and Mr. Cannon *go?*" "Oh, they are not gone yet, sir," replied the man, "they've just rung for coffee!"

Mr. Price was an American by birth: he gave bachelor dinners in good style; and is said to have introduced in this country, the gin punch, of high fame at the Garrick Club, of which Price was a member. It is made as follows: pour half a pint of gin on the outer peel of a lemon, then a little lemon-juice; a glass of maraschino, about a pint and a quarter of water, and two bottles of iced soda-water; and the result will be three pints of the punch in question. One afternoon, Hook happened to drop in at the Garrick, and found there Stephen Price with a jug of the above punch, which he delighted to brew for himself: Hook's opinion was asked: he sat down, and some half-dozen pints of the punch were imbibed before Hook could make up his mind as to its merits. In the evening, he went to dine at Lord Canterbury's: he was observed to eat less than usual, and on being asked if he was unwell, replied: "Oh, no, not exactly; but my stomach won't bear trifling with, and I was foolish enough to take a biscuit and a glass of sherry by way of luncheon."

"THE SPLENDID ANNUAL."

In the summer of 1829, John Sharpe, the tasteful publisher, of Duke-street, and Piccadilly, commenced *Sharpe's London Magazine*, with the experienced Allan Cunningham for its editor. To the opening number, Hook contributed a paper, called "The Splendid Annual," describing the year of the Mayoralty of Alderman Scropps, from the morning of the ninth of November, to the last day of his civic kingship.

Nothing can exceed the humour of this paper—the admirable quizzing, and the amusing minuteness,—with which all the mayoralty preparations are described. "My name is Scropps," he says. "I *am* an Alderman—I *was* Sheriff—I *have been* Lord Mayor; and the three great eras of my existence were, the year of my shrievalty, the year of my mayoralty, and the year after it. Until I had passed through this ordeal, I had no conceptions of the extremes of happiness and wretchedness to which a human being may be carried, nor ever believed that society presented to its members an eminence so exalted as that which I once touched, or imagined a fall so great as that which I experienced."

Then, how pleasantly he tells us that he came originally from Coventry (whither persons of bad character are said to be sent); how his father failed in business, and the young Scropps, at fifteen, walked to London, with 15*s.* 11½*d.* in his pocket. He got a situation in the City, succeeded his master in his business, and became a dealer in everything, from barrels of gunpowder down to pickled herrings; he accumulated wealth, married, and his family consisted of one male Scropps, and four female ditto. He runs through his labours as Common-councilman, to his election as Sheriff—his taking his children to Great Queen-street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, to see his state-chariot, with the arms, including those of the Scroppses (recently found at a trifling expense) all figuring upon the panels. He contemplates the equipage, and says to himself: "What have I done to deserve *this?* Oh, that my poor father were alive to see his boy Jack going down to Westminster, to chop sticks and count hobnails, in a carriage like this!" . . . "When executions, the chief drawbacks to my delight, happened, I found, after a little seasoning, I took the thing coolly, and enjoyed my toast and tea, after the patients were turned off, just as if nothing had happened; for in *my* time we hanged at eight, and breakfasted at a quarter after, so that, without much hurry, we were able to finish our muffins just in time for the cutting-down at nine."

The Mayoralty follows: his ears tingle when he is first called "My Lord"—he even doubts if it is addressed to him, and he hesitates to answer; but it *is* so—the reign of splendour has begun.

He cannot sleep all night for his greatness: the wind down the chimney sounds like the shouts of the people; the cocks

crowing in the mews at the back of the house he took for trumpets sounding his approach; and the ordinary incidental noises in the family he fancied the popguns at Stangate, announcing his disembarkation at Westminster. So literal is all this, that, now the Mayoralty pageant is shorn of its aquatic features, Hook's narrative may be read as an historic record.

In dressing, Scropps slit his broadcloth inexpressibles—a seam has been ripped half a yard long. What is to be done? "I heard trumpets in earnest, carriages drawing up and setting down; sheriffs and chaplains, mace-bearers, train-bearers, sword-bearers, water-bailiffs, remembrancer, Mr. Common Hunt, the Town-clerk," &c., all bustling about; "the bells ringing, and I late, with a hole in my inexpressibles!" However, the rent is repaired, and out he turns.

Then, his droll mishaps—how, when he enters the state-coach, and throws himself back upon the broad seat, with all imaginable dignity; but, in the midst of his ease and elegance, he snaps off the cut-steel hilt of his sword, by accidentally bumping the whole weight of his body right, or rather wrong, directly upon the top of it.

Through fog and glory, he reached Blackfriars-bridge, took water, and in the barge, tasted none of the collation—for all he saw, heard, and swallowed was—"Lord Mayor"—and "your Lordship," far sweeter than nectar. At the presentation at Westminster, he saw two of the judges, whom he remembered on the circuit, when he trembled at the sight of them—believing them to be some extraordinary creatures upon whom all the hair and fur grew naturally.

Then, the Lady Mayoress—"there she was—Sally Scropps (her maiden name was Snob)—there was my own Sally, with a plume of feathers that half filled the coach, and Jenny and Maria, and young Sally, all with their backs to *my* horses, which were pawing with mud and snorting and smoking like steam-engines, with nostrils like safety-valves, and four of *my* footmen behind the coach, like bees in a swarm."

Perhaps, the most effective portion of the paper is the *reverse* of the picture. My Lord and Lady and their family had just got settled in the Mansion House, and easy their dignity, when the ninth of November came again—the consummation of Scropps's downfal. Again did they go in state to Guildhall, again were they toasted and addressed, again were they handed in, and led out, again flirted with cabinet

ministers and danced with ambassadors, and at two o'clock in the morning, drove home from the scene of gaiety to the old residence in Budge-row. "Never in this world did pickled herrings or turpentine smell so powerfully as on that night when we entered the house; * * * the passage looked so narrow, the drawing-rooms looked so small, the staircase seemed so dark, our apartments appeared so low. In the morning we assembled at breakfast—a note lay upon the table, addressed, 'Mrs. Scropps, Budge-row.' The girls, one after the other, took it up, read the superscription, and laid it down again. A visitor was announced—a neighbour and kind friend, a man of wealth and importance—what were his first words?—they were the first I had heard from a stranger since my job—'How are you, Scropps; done up, eh?'

"Scropps! no obsequiousness, no deference, no respect;—no 'my lord, I hope your lordship passed an agreeable night—and how is your ladyship and her amiable daughters?'—no, not a bit of it—'How's Mrs. S. and the *gals?* This was quite natural, all as it had been—but, how unlike what it *was*, only the day before! The very servants, who, when amidst the strapping, stall-fed, gold-laced lacqueys of the Mansion House, and transferred with the chairs and tables from one Lord Mayor to another, dared not speak, nor look, nor say their lives were their own, strutted about the house, and banged the doors, and talked of their *Missis*, as if she had been an old apple-woman.

"So much for domestic miseries;—I went out—I was shoved about in Cheapside in the most remorseless manner; my right eye had a narrow escape of being poked out by the tray of a brawny butcher's boy, who, when I civilly remonstrated, turned round, and said, 'Vy, I say, who are *you*, I vonder, who is so partiklar about your *hysight.*' I felt an involuntary shudder—to-day, thought I, I *am* John Ebenezer Scropps—two days ago, I was Lord Mayor!"

We have quoted from this sketch of thirty years ago, since we do not remember to have seen it in any selection from Hook's works.

HOOK'S RESIDENCES.

From Temple-place he went to reside in a good house at Putney, to which locality he was much attached. In 1827, he removed to a handsome house in Cleveland-row, St. James's, and became a member of divers clubs.

Mr. Barham gives a fearful picture of the cost of this removal: "he laid out between 2,000*l.* and 3,000*l.* in furnishing the house, accepting bills for the amount; but, as is generally the case, increased expenditure in living led to increase of visits to great houses in the country—all which added to expenditure, and deprived him of time for adding to his professional income. Ready money become scarce, supplies must be raised at any cost, his account with the *John Bull* was overdrawn, and the patience of his co-proprietors exhausted; fresh engagements were, in consequence, entered into, and advances obtained from the publishers." In these embarrassments, it is satisfactory to learn from Hook's letters, that he invariably acknowledges the liberality of the publishers, (Messrs. Bentley and Colburn,) with whom he was principally concerned. He obtained temporary relief by the sale of a moiety of his share in the *John Bull*, for which he received 4,000*l.*

He was now an occasional guest at Hatfield House, where he provided "Private and Confidential Dramas," for the admirers of amateur theatricals; at Lord Canterbury's, Sir Robert Peel's, and Sir Francis Burdett's he was also received. At Ham House, he was presented by the Countess of Dysart to the Duke of Cumberland, ultimately King of Hanover, who received him at Kew, and proved, to the last, his sincere friend.

While residing in Cleveland-row, Mr. Hook fell in with an old college acquaintance, the Rev. Mr. Barham, in whom he found an attached friend, and an honest adviser in literary matters. His diary relates this pleasant anecdote. Mr. Barham called one day in Cleveland-row. Haynes Bayley was there, discussing a devilled kidney. Hook introduced him, saying, "Barham—Mr. Bayley—there are several of the name: this is not 'Old Bailey,' with whom you may one day become intimate, but the gentleman whom we call 'Butterfly Bayley (in allusion to his song, 'I'd be a butterfly,' then in the height of its popularity)." "A misnomer, Hook," replied Barham, "Mr. Bayley is not yet *out* of the *grub!*"

AT FULHAM.

In 1831, Mr. Hook gave up his house in Cleveland-row, and settled in a small villa at Fulham, in the lane leading to the Bishop of London's palace. The house has a garden reaching to the river, above the bridge. This was a sudden

contrast to the gaiety of St. James's; but its retired situation was well suited for a man of letters. In the garden, upon the wall overhanging the Thames, a friend viewing Putney-bridge, observed that he had been informed that it was a very good investment, and turning to his host, inquired if such was the case—if the bridge really answered? "I don't know," said Theodore; "but you have only to cross it, and you are sure to be *tolled*."

"GILBERT GURNEY."

In 1836, Hook became editor of the *New Monthly Magazine*, at a salary of 400*l*. per annum, exclusive of payment for original contributions. He signalized his accession to the office by commencing in the magazine his *Gilbert Gurney*, in monthly instalments of the story, a plan which he always deprecated as disadvantageous to both reader and author. We have already adverted to the leading characters and *plaisanterie* of this remarkable work. One of the earliest instances is the following river scene, in which figures Daly:

"I say, you sir," cried the undaunted joker, to a very respectable round-bodied gentleman, who was sitting squeezed into the stern-sheets of a skiff, floating most agreeably to himself adown the stream, "what are you doing there? You have no business in that boat, and you know it!"

A slight yaw of the skiff into the wind's eye was the only proof of the stout navigator's agitation. Still, Daly was inexorable, and he again called to the unhappy mariner to get out of the boat.

"I tell you, my fat friend," cried he, "you have no business in that boat!"

Flesh and blood could not endure this reiterated declaration, the ire of the cockney was roused.

"No business in that boat, sir? What d'ye mean?"

"I mean what I say," said Daly; "you have no business in it, and I'll prove it."

"I think, sir, you'll prove no such thing," said the navigator, whose progress through the water was none of the quickest; "perhaps you don't know, sir, that it is my own pleasure-boat?"

"That's it," said Daly, "now you *have* it, no man can have any *business* in a *pleasure*-boat. Good day. That's all."

Here are a few more agreeable things selected from this extraordinary book:

One of the best practical jokes is Daly's hoax upon the lady who had never been at Richmond before, or, at least, knew none of the peculiarities of the place. Daly desired the waiter, after dinner, to bring some "maids of honour," those

cheesecakes for which the place has, time out of mind, been celebrated. The lady stared, then laughed, and asked, "What do you mean by 'maids of honour!'" "Dear me!" said Daly, "don't you know that this is so courtly a place, and so completely under the influence of state etiquette, that everything in Richmond is called after the functionaries of the palace? What are called cheesecakes elsewhere, are here called maids of honour; a capon is called a lord chamberlain; a goose is a lord steward; a roast pig is a master of the horse; a pair of ducks, grooms of the bedchamber; a gooseberry tart, a gentleman-usher of the black rod; and so on." The unsophisticated lady was taken in, and when she actually saw the maids of honour make their appearance in the shape of cheesecakes, she convulsed the whole party by turning to the waiter, and desiring him, in a sweet but decided tone, to bring her a gentleman-usher of the black-rod, if they had one in the house, quite cold.

Hook describes an odd dinner of which he partook in the west of England. The soup was a nice sort of veal broth; at the bottom of the table was a roast loin of *veal;* at the top, half a *calf's* head; there were four *entrées—veal* patties, *veal* collops, *calf's* brains, and *calf's* tongue. One of the guests, who hated veal, apparently waited for the second course, when the fair hostess apologized: "we have no second course; the fact is, we killed a calf the day before yesterday, and we are such prudent managers, that we make a point of eating it up while it is good, and nice, and fresh, before we begin upon anything else."

A stand-up supper is "tables against the wall, covered with cold negus and warm ice; where men, women, and children, take perpendicular refreshment, like so many horses with their noses in the manger."

The swaggerer is invariably an impostor—the man who calls loudest for the waiter, who treats him worst, and who finds more fault than any one else in the room, when the company is mixed, will always turn out to be the man of all others the least entitled, either by rank or intelligence, to give himself airs. People who are conscious of what is due to them never display irritability or impetuosity; their manners ensure civility, their civility secures respect; but the blockhead or the coxcomb, fully aware that something more than ordinary is necessary to produce an effect, whether in clubs or coffee-rooms, is sure to be the most fastidious and

captious of the community, the most overbearing in his manners towards his inferiors—the most restless and irritable among his equals—the most cringing and subservient before his superiors.

The Code of Card-table Signals, in *Gilbert Gurney*, might be very effectually reduced to practice. "Never," says he, "let man and wife play together at whist. There are always family telegraphs; and if they fancy their looks are watched, they can always communicate by words. I found out that I could never win of Smigsmag and his wife. I mentioned this one day, and was answered: 'No, you never can win of them.' 'Why?' said I. 'Because,' said my friend, 'they have established a code.' 'Dear me,' said I, 'signals by looks?' 'No,' said he, 'by words.' If Mrs. Smigsmag is to lead, Smigsmag says, Dear, begin; Dear begins with D, so does diamond, and out comes one from the lady. If he has to lead, and she says S. my love, she wants a spade. Smigsmag and spade begin with the same letter, and sure enough down comes a spade. Harriet, my dear, how long you are sorting your cards! Mrs. Smigsmag stumps down a heart; and a gentle, come, my love, on either side, produces a club.'"

TOM SHERIDAN OUT SHOOTING.

This story has found its way into many a book of jest and anecdote; but as told by Hook, in *Gilbert Gurney*, it is worth repeating:

Tom Sheridan was staying at Lord Craven's at Benham (or rather Hampstead), and one day proceeded on a shooting excursion, like Hawthorn, with only his "dog and his gun," on foot, and unattended by companion or keeper; the sport was bad, the birds few and shy—and he walked and walked in search of game, until, unconsciously, he entered the domain of some neighbouring squire.

A very short time after, he perceived advancing towards him, at the top of his speed, a jolly, comfortable gentleman, followed by a servant, armed, as it appeared, for conflict. Tom took up a position, and waited the approach of the enemy.

"Hallo! you sir," said the squire, when within half earshot; "what are you doing here, sir, eh?"

"I'm shooting, sir," said Tom.

"Do you know where you are, sir?" said the squire.

"I'm here, sir," said Tom.

"Here, sir?" said the squire, growing angry; "and do you know where here *is*, sir?—these, sir, are *my* manors; what d'ye think of that, sir, eh?"

"Why, sir, as to your manners," said Tom, "I can't say they seem over-agreeable."

"I don't want any jokes, sir," said the squire; "I hate jokes. Who are you, sir?—what are you?"

"Why, sir," said Tom, "my name is Sheridan—I am staying at Lord Craven's—I have come out for some sport—I have not had any, and I am not aware that I am trespassing."

"Sheridan!" said the squire, cooling a little, "oh! from Lord Craven's, eh?—Well, sir, I could not know *that*, sir—I—"

"No, sir," said Tom, "but you need not have been in a passion."

"Not in a passion, Mr. Sheridan!" said the squire; "you don't know, sir, what these preserves have cost me, and the pains and trouble I have been at with them; it's all very well for you to talk, but if you were in *my* place, I should like to know what *you* would say upon such an occasion."

"Why, sir," said Tom, "if I were in your place, under the circumstances, I should say—I am convinced, Mr. Sheridan, you did not mean to annoy me, and as you look a good deal tired, perhaps you'll come up to my house and take some refreshment."

The squire was hit by this *nonchalance*, and, it is needless to add, acted upon Sheridan's suggestion.

"So far," said poor Tom, "the story tells for me, now you shall hear the sequel."

After having regaled himself at the squire's house, and having said five hundred more good things than he swallowed; having delighted his host, and having half won the hearts of his wife and daughters, the sportsman proceeded on his return homewards.

In the course of his walk, he passed through a farmyard; in the front of the farmhouse was a green, in the centre of which was a pond—in the pond were ducks innumerable swimming and diving; on its verdant banks a motley group of gallant cocks and pert partlets, picking and feeding—the farmer was leaning over the hatch of the barn, which stood near two cottages on the side of the green.

Tom hated to go back with an empty bag; and, having failed in his attempts at higher game, it struck him as a good joke to ridicule the exploits of the day himself, in order to prevent any one else from doing it for him; and he thought that to carry home a certain number of the domestic inhabitants of the pond and its vicinity, would serve the purpose admirably. Accordingly, up he goes to the farmer, and accosts him very civilly.

"My good friend," says Tom, "I make you an offer."

"Of what, sur?" says the farmer.

"Why," replies Tom, "I've been out all day fagging after birds, and haven't had a shot. Now, both my barrels are loaded—I should like to take home something; what shall I give you to let me have a shot with each barrel at those ducks and fowls—I standing here—and to have whatever I kill?"

"What sort of a shot are you?" said the farmer.

"Fairish!" said Tom, "fairish!"

"And to *have* all you kill?" said the farmer, "eh?"

"Exactly so," said Tom.

"Half a guinea," said the farmer.

"That's too much," said Tom. "I'll tell you what I'll do—I'll give

you a seven-shilling piece, which happens to be all the money I have in my pocket."

"Well," said the man, "hand it over."

The payment was made. Tom, true to his bargain, took his post by the barn-door, and let fly with one barrel, and then with the other, and such quacking and splashing, and screaming and fluttering, had never been seen in that place before.

Away ran Tom, and, delighted at his success, picked up first a hen, then a chicken, then fished out a dying duck or two, and so on, until he numbered eight head of domestic game, with which his bag was nobly distended.

"Those were right good shots, sur," said the farmer.

"Yes," said Tom, "eight duck and fowls were more than you bargained for, old fellow—worth rather more, I suspect, than seven shillings—eh?"

"Why, yes," said the man, scratching his head, "I think they be; but what do I care for that? *they are none of them mine!*"

"Here," said Tom, "I was for once in my life *beaten*, and made off as fast as I could, for fear the right owner of my game might make his appearance—not but that I could have given the fellow that took me in seven times as much as I did, for his cunning and coolness."

MISCELLANEOUS WORKS.

We have omitted to mention that, in 1826, Hook wrote for his old theatrical and musical friend Michael Kelly his very entertaining *Reminiscences*, from the rough memoranda of Michael. This is, perhaps, the best anecdote-book of its class; and being the first of a run of such books, it had the advantage of the first versions of certain stories, and these told by such a finished hand as that of Theodore Hook. It contains some good anecdotes of Sheridan, to which we have already referred in the present volume.

In 1832, Hook published *The Life of Sir David Baird*, which so pleased the family, that they presented the author with a gold snuff-box set with brilliants, the gift of the Pacha of Egypt to the subject of the Memoir. Mr. Barham tells us that the costly present was thrown, without examination, into a drawer, but as accidentally discovered.

The *Parson's Daughter*, and *Love and Pride*, two novels, followed; and *Gurney Married*, an inferior sequel. In 1837 appeared *Jack Brag*, the leading character a sporting wax-chandler. "The author and the original met on one occasion, (Mr. Barham relates,) at the house of Mr. Murray, the publisher. In a few days afterwards, Hook asked his friend how he could permit such an underbred cockney to cross his threshold? "I have just parted with him," was the reply;

"and he was curious to learn how I ventured to admit into my family such an impertinent caricaturist as yourself."

Jack Brag was followed, in 1839, by *Births, Deaths, and Marriages,* for which the author received 600*l.*: it proved, however, of too serious humour for Hook's readers. This was his last completed work. Altogether, he produced eighteen volumes in sixteen years; besides editing a weekly newspaper, and, for some years, a magazine.

HOOK'S BUSY DAY.

Although Mr. Hook was quietly settled in his villa at Fulham, with the delightful aids of a library, and the comforts of a retired and rural home, he too often left this scene of rest for his old connexions in the metropolis, which, in the words of the old dramatist, brought him to all manner of unrest. Mr. Barham has sketched, and by no means overcharged, one of these "restless, life-exhausting days" as follows:

A late breakfast—his spirits jaded by the exertions of yesterday, and further depressed by the impending weight of some pecuniary difficulty—large arrears of literary toil to be made up—the meal sent away untasted—every power of his mind forced and strained, for the next four or five hours, upon the subject that happens to be in hand—then a rapid drive to town and a visit, first to one club, where, the centre of an admiring circle, his intellectual faculties are again upon the stretch, and again aroused and sustained by artificial means: the same thing repeated at a second—the same drain, and the same supply—ballot or "general meeting at a third, the chair taken by Mr. Hook, who, as a friend observes, addresses the members, produces the accounts, audits and passes them—gives a succinct statement of the prospects and finances of the Society—parries an awkward question—extinguishes a grumbler—confounds an opponent—proposes "a vote of thanks to himself, seconds, carries it," and returns thanks with a vivacious rapidity that entirely confounds the unorganized schemes of the minority—then, a chop in the committee-room, and "just one tumbler of brandy-and-water," or *two,* and we fear the catalogue would not always close there. Off next to take his place at some lordly banquet, where the fire of wit is to be stirred again into dazzling blaze, and fed by fresh supplies of potent stimulants. Lady A——

has never heard one of his delightful *extempores*—the pianoforte is at hand—(we have seen it established, with *malice prepense*, in the dining-room, when he has been expected)—fresh and more vigorous efforts of fancy memory, and application are called for—all the wondrous machinery of the brain taxed and strained to the very utmost—smiles and applause reward the exertion; and perhaps, one more *chanson*, if he has shown himself thoroughly in the vein, is craved as a special favour.

He retires, at last, but not to rest—not to home. Half an hour at Crockford's is proposed by some gay companion, as they quit together—we need not continue the picture; the half hour is quadrupled, and the excitement of the preceding evening is as nothing to that which now ensues—whether he rises from the table winner or loser, by the time he has reached Fulham the reaction is complete, and in a state of utter prostration, bodily and mental, he seeks his pillow—to run, perhaps, a precisely similar course on the morrow.

In a note, Mr. Barham relates, from a friend, that Hook had a receipt of his own to prevent being exposed to the night air. "I was very ill," he said "some months ago, and my doctor gave me particular orders not to expose myself to it; so, I come up every day to Crockford's, or some other place to dinner, and I make it a rule on no account to go home again till about four or five o'clock in the morning."

AT THE ATHENÆUM CLUB.

Hook was, perhaps, the most clubbable man of his time; and, if we except Poole, no man has sketched the life of clubs so truthfully. At the Athenæum Hook was a great card; and in a note to the *Quarterly* sketch it is stated that the number of dinners at this Club fell off by upwards of 300 per annum after Mr. Hook disappeared from his favourite corner, near the door of the coffee-room. That is to say, there must have been some dozens of gentlemen who chose to dine there once or twice every week of the season, merely for the chance of his being there, and permitting them to draw their chairs to his little table in the course of the evening. Of the extent to which he suffered from this sort of invasion, there are several bitter, oblique complaints in his novels (see, for instance, *Births, Deaths, and Marriages*, vol. ii. p. 65). The *corner* alluded to will, we suppose, long retain the name

which it derived from him—*Temperance Corner*. Many grave and dignified personages being frequent guests, it would hardly have been seemly to be calling for repeated supplies of a certain description; but the waiters well understood what the oracle of the Corner meant by "Another glass of toast and water," or, "A little more lemonade."

The last time Mr. Rogers saw Hook was in the lobby of Lord Canterbury's house, after a large evening party there. He was walking up and down, singing with great gravity, to the astonishment of the footmen, "Shepherds, I have lost my *hat*."

A DAY OF REST.

Occasionally, Hook enjoyed a day's relaxation from his busy round, which he thus pictures in one of his later works, *Precept and Practice:*

I have always, (he says,) a tolerably large, and an extremely agreeable, circle of acquaintance—many people who know the world less than I do would call them friends—but still, the memory of past days, and the recollection of what I *might* have been, compared with what I *am*, makes me seek, at certain times, the charm and comfort of solitude. I do not mean in the gloomy sense of the word, I mean the charm and comfort of being alone, free, and my own master—uncontrolled, unchecked, and independent. This feeling—this desire to leave all gaiety—all the society in which one ordinarily moves—to cast off the world and its cares, or, as they are sometimes called, pleasures, has led me to make my annual tour, just during the period in which partridge-shooting ceases to be a novelty, and pheasant-shooting has not begun.

He liked a sauntering excursion up the Thames, for the purpose of fishing, or rather for that recreation which delights far more than the taking of fish. This was a most refreshing change: he was then gentle almost to contemplation, and moderate in his diet. His favourite resort was Ditton, which he has thus commemorated:

Give me a punt, a rod, and a line,
A snug arm-chair to sit on,
Some well-iced punch, and weather fine,
And let me fish at Ditton!

HOOK AND HIS CO-PARTNERS.

Of the last few years of Mr. Hook's life at Fulham there is little to record, save that it was divided between extreme gaiety and extreme labour, or that breaking-up of the intellectual powers to which periodical exercise and exhaustion contribute more than half the world are aware of. Dr. Johnson found this to be the case more than a century and a half ago: how much greater must be this mental wear-and-tear in our age of steam-engine literature!

Mr. Hook still found his co-partner, Mr. Shackell, a firm and serviceable friend. They had now toiled together, each in his way, for a quarter of a century; but Hook's embarrassments would no longer allow him to devote such time to the *John Bull* as his co-partners considered requisite. Hints to this effect proved unavailing, and Shackell was chosen to make a formal remonstrance. He had borne the brunt of fines and prosecutions, providing money under all circumstances, as Hook's own letters prove. It was, therefore, unjustifiable for him to receive as offensive a complaint upon a matter of business, and the mutual interest of the concern. The losing game is hardest to play in business, as well as in pleasure, and some allowance should have been made for Shackell's position. The old comrades quarrelled; but a touching letter of condolence from Hook to Shackell on the loss of his only daughter, calmed all angry feelings, and proved one of the sweet uses of adversity.

Mr. Shackell subsequently proposed a plan for the relief of Mr. Hook from his embarrassments, but, having submitted it to the legal adviser to *Bull*, and who had a considerable stake in the concern, Hook was thereat very irate, and complained of his letter being handed about the town like a novel from a circulating library—corresponding by attorney, &c. Hook's letter is, moreover, strong in protestation of never in his life having played a game—never finessed—never manœuvred; he adds: "If I had chosen to do so, perhaps God has given me the power."

The coolness increased, and intercourse ceased for some time; but a humorous letter from Hook healed the grievance; and we next read of Mr. Shackell's visit to Fulham, and Theodore (who had faith in dreams,) trying to persuade his friend to advance the money for two tickets in a German lottery. S. refused: they, however, sat down to backgam-

mon; a broiled fowl followed; they chatted and played on, and when Shackell left at 11 o'clock at night, he had been coaxed into the partnership of the tickets; and these were sealed up for the two partners, who were "to share and share alike," in the division of the proceeds. They turned up blanks, and so the arithmetical process was not needed.

LAST DAYS.

Mr. Hook's Diary records that, on the 20th of June, (Sunday,) though in ill health, he dined at Lord Harrington's to meet the Duke of Wellington. "There—D. and Duchess of Bedford, Lord and Lady Southampton, Lord Londonderry, Lord Canterbury, Lord Lyndhurst, Lord Redesdale, Lord Charleville, Lord Strangford, Lord Stuart de Rothesay, Count d'Orsay, Lord Chesterfield, and Fitzroy Stanhope." This brilliant party was the last time but one that Hook dined from home.

He dined with his dear friend Major Shadwell Clarke, in Brompton-grove, on July 14. He, however, ate but a little fruit, and drank large glasses of champagne and brandy, in which he mixed effervescing powder. His gaiety was now flickering out; and like most *bon-vivants* in their last stage, he was appalled at the wretched state to which his own waste of life had brought him. It seems to be a common fallacy that hard work deserves, as a sort of make-weight, proportionate indulgence in living; but, assuredly, this is lighting the candle at both ends, which Hook had long been doing. It is recorded of him that when in the drawing-room at Major Clarke's, on seeing his own figure in the mirror, he said, "Ay, I see I look as I am—done up in purse, in mind, and in body too, at last."

In about a fortnight, July 29, Mr. Barham, at Hook's request, went to see him at Fulham: at luncheon, Theodore made an unsuccessful attempt to swallow, when he said: "It is of no use, old fellow; the fact is, I have not tasted a morsel of solid food these five days!" "Then, what on earth have you lived upon?" to which he replied, "effervescing draughts;" adding afterwards that he was allowed to take occasionally a tumbler of rum and milk, or a pint of Guinness' bottled porter.

Mr. Barham pressed on him the necessity of having further advice, which he promised to take. His friend then proposed

that he should lay aside work for a time, and accompany him to the Isle of Thanet, where Mrs. Barham was staying. But he was completely tied to his desk until he had completed what he was writing; and he promised, in a month, to pay the Barhams a visit, if they were still at Margate. Mr. Barham, before taking leave of Hook, expressed his sympathy at his illness having peeled him down—when drawing aside his dressing-gown, he showed a thin man in a stout man's clothes.

In about a fortnight, the Rev. Mr. Gleig, then chaplain of Chelsea Hospital, an old acquaintance, called to pay Hook a visit; when the servant, thinking Mr. Gleig came in his clerical capacity, he was at once admitted. Hook was caught in *déshabille*, but made the best of it, saying, "Well, you see me as I am at last—all the bucklings, and paddings, and washings, and brushings, dropt for ever—a poor old grey-haired man, with my belly about my knees." He then grew too weak for conversation.

Mr. Gleig repeated his visit with better effect; but, day by day, poor Hook grew weaker. On the 13th of August, he wrote several hours, and then sunk exhausted; the light of life had begun to flicker out. His symptoms grew more alarming within the next three days; and, as he had long resided at Fulham, and was well-known for sympathising with many a case of suffering and distress among his poorer neighbours, the feeling of regret was general. He did not again leave his bed. "The Bishop of London, on hearing of his condition, called, and wrote, to offer his personal ministration in the offices of religion;" but the communication did not reach him in time. During the preceding week, at his own request, however, his nephew, the Rev. Robert Hook, had constantly been by his bedside, and repeatedly read the prayers of the Church.

On the evening of August 24, Mr. Hook expired, apparently without pain; and without his watching friends knowing the last ebb of life. Thus passed from among us, in his fifty-third year, Theodore Hook, who, by his natural abilities, had been, from his boyhood, the charm of many an admiring circle; and who, by his rare talent for observation, had, by his works, afforded delight and instruction to thousands of readers, in almost every part of the world. The gay and cheerful spirit which had illumined many a festive table—had departed—the flashes of merriment had fled for ever! the brief candle was burnt out!

He was buried with privacy in Fulham churchyard, directly opposite the chancel window; as Mr. Barham touchingly describes the site, "within a few paces of his former home."

There are in the churchyard at Fulham many monuments to the learned and wealthy, the titled and great; but the earthly resting-place of Theodore Hook is marked by a simple stone, bearing his name and age! There were very few mourners at his funeral.

Mr. Hook's sufferings had been long and painful, from diseased liver and stomach, the seeds of which were sown in his luxurious colonial living, as well as by the mental anxiety resulting from this portion of his life, which embittered the remainder of his existence. He died deeply in debt. Shortly after his death, the effects at Fulham were sold by auction, and produced 2,500*l.*; his collection of works of art was good. We remember to have gone over the house previous to the sale: the author's study and his Glastonbury chair were much noticed; and among the visitors, and in the village, we heard frequent mention of Hook's humane and charitable feeling—a more trustworthy expression than is often to be seen upon monumental brass or marble.

The proceeds of the sale were taken by the Crown, on account of the Mauritius claim; this being the third sale of his effects for that purpose. It was hoped that the last amount realized would in whole or part, have been granted to the five children whom Hook had left unprovided for: such, however, was not the case; and this was the coldness of a Conservative adminstration! What was thus sternly denied was, however, supplied by private humanity: a subscription was opened, the executors and two or three other old friends heading the list with 100*l.* each; "but few, very few, of those who had either profited as politicians by Theodore Hook's zeal and ability, or courted him in their lofty circles for the fascination of his wit, were found to show any feeling for his unfortunate offspring. We must mention one very generous exception. His Majesty the King of Hanover, the instant he understood the circumstances, transmitted 500*l.* Two members of Mr. Hook's own family came forward in a manner worthy of their high characters, to an extent, we believe, not altogether convenient for their means." *

* Sketch, from the *Quarterly Review*, p. 95.

CHARACTERISTICS, RETROSPECTIVE OPINIONS, AND PERSONAL TRAITS.

A few days after Mr. Hook's death, there appeared in the *Literary Gazette* the following estimate of his character in private life, from a friend of thirty-six years' standing:

"It is too early a time to speak of this singularly gifted individual, except in the spontaneous and general terms of that sorrow which flows from the thought that we shall never listen to his voice again; never hear those sparkling sallies which used to 'set the table in a roar;' never dwell with unmingled admiration on those extemporaneous effusions, in which he had no equal, and which were the delight and wonder of all who knew him; never witness that unabating spirit and unflagging mirth which made him the soul and centre of the convivial circle; never harken him on to new effort and additional triumphs, after he had achieved more than would have been fame to twenty acknowledged wits; never again look upon that bright, dark, flashing eye, illuminated with mind; never more feel the force of that manly sense, acute observation, and accurate intelligence, which rendered him as instructive when gravity prevailed, as he was unapproachable when festivity ruled the hour. Alas! dear Hook, there is now a void, indeed, where you filled so enviable a place; a gloom where you so gloriously shone.

"His skill and readiness in music was almost equal to his powers in extempore poetical composition. He could invent and execute an opera on the spur of the moment; as he could conceive and sing half a dozen humorous and pointed songs, in an afternoon, upon any subjects proposed to him. His jest was always ready, and his repartee so prompt, and so surely a hit, slight if playful, but heavy if provoked, that all around him soon became aware that his fires were either innocuously glancing or scorching, as the circumstance inflamed called them forth.

"But, whatever he was in his humour, he was warm in his friendships, liberal and generous in his character, charitable

and humane in his nature. In many points he had no rival, and active as his path had been for many years, we believe that he did not make a personal enemy. Sure we are that his memory will be hallowed by the esteem due to genius and by the mournful regrets of those who were his associates in scenes, the indescribable charms of which, all elicited by him, they never can forget."

His conduct in the Mauritius affair is examined with candour and fairness in the *Quarterly* sketch, more in detail than accords with our purpose. That the subject pressed heavily upon his mind is recorded in various passages of his *private* journal. He writes:

"*Jan.* 1*st*, 1824.—I begin this diary under no very propitious circumstances, for I am in prison for a debt said to be due to the Crown for 12,000*l.*, incurred during my treasurership at the Mauritius. I never had any of the money, and I have already suffered the heavy process of extent, already been a prisoner for ten months before this. However, I shall not despair—*spero meliora*—and in the hope and belief that truth and justice will ultimately prevail, begin the year with a general forgiveness of all my enemies.

"*Jan.* 1*st*, 1839.—I never began a year with less shining prospects, yet I trust in God who, through all my follies, vanities, and indiscretions, knows that my heart is right and my intentions just. To Him I look with confidence for help, not for my own sake, but for those unoffending dear ones who have been brought into the world by my means. I will not despair then, but look forward with hope, and perhaps the clouds which hang over the dawn of 1839 may, by the blessing of Providence, clear away by its noon."

Hook is described in natural gifts perhaps inferior to very few of his contemporaries. "His countenance was open and engaging—his figure tall and well-knit—his constitution vigorous—his temper sweet—his heart warm. He was humane, charitable, generous. We do not believe that his wit ever lost him a friend; and there was that about him which made it hard to be often in his society without regarding him with as much of fondness as of admiration. That he was viewed with painful compassion also by those who at all penetrated the secrets of his life, will now be readily believed."—(*Quarterly* Sketch, p. 95.) Perhaps the most striking pages in this very interesting, and we are persuaded, serviceable, view of Hook's career is the vivid description of

his visits to his great connexions in the country—his share in the gaieties of their luxurious establishments, and at the same time the harassing demands upon his time for the editorship of the *John Bull*, for which purpose he had to steal away, for miles, to some remote inn, and there meeting one of the managers of the journal from town, write articles and columns with sufficient rapidity to enable him to return in time to rejoin the gay idlers at his friends' houses.

We have a recollection of the journal which he thus conducted, from its commencement. In its earliest days, its fun was too fast and furious, except for the purpose with which it was established. When events took a graver turn, *Bull* also became steadier. But it was amidst the many shades of opinion which his own party avowed, that Hook displayed his practical good sense and tact. He well understood the difference between operation and chalking out, and he wisely acted upon it; so that the journal retained its popularity, which became more stable, even amidst the breaking-up of the broad distinctions of party. Its general tone, and its adaptation for good society, the consistency of its opinions and the accuracy of its information, have rendered it a valuable organ of the public press.

Hook's political songs and satires have not lost their pungency with time, save in a few instances; and the *domesticity* of his humour will long be remembered: his tales and sketches, and individual portraits abound with moral teachings. What can be more truthful than these remarks:

"Rely upon it that *wrong never comes right*, and that no man is truly respectable until he marries, and devotes his cares, his attentions, and his anxieties to a gentle and confiding partner, whose virtues and merits soothe him in adversity, and give new brightness to prosperity."

Next is one of the writer's sad experiences:—

"The wretched nervousness of a life of pecuniary embarrassment more than outweighs the unfair enjoyment of unjustifiable luxuries. Would an alderman relish his turtle if he were forced to eat it sitting on the tight-rope? Answer me that question; and I will tell you the sort of splendid misery which that man enjoys who spends double his income, and is indebted to his goldsmith, his tailor, and his coachmaker, not for his dishes, his clothes, and his carriages only, but for the privilege of using them at liberty."

Hook's writings have been objected to as *stagy* or farcical;

but he delighted in showing up vulgar pretensions and low affectation, and the actors themselves, in such cases, are little better than caricatures. He drew London life with humour and manner exclusively his own: it is not so broad as Foote's, neither were the times, and each humourist drew from what he saw about him. We remember when the dinner-scenes in his novels were thought too frequent; yet where else do you find such sly satire upon the silver-fork school, or that upstart section of society which played its fantastic tricks with a vengeance when Hook's novels were in the ascendant? He was, in his day, the best talker and teller of good stories, and his mintage of good things was unsurpassed. He could please all ages: he had a conundrum for the child, and amusing talk for the old lady: his drollery was exhaustless; yet all was extemporaneous and without effort. But he had his serious moments; and the under-current of his writings shows that he oftener practised self-examination than his friends imagined, or the world gave him credit for.

HOOK'S SUPERSTITION.

We have already noticed his faith in dreams, lucky numbers, &c. In his Diary, we find this entry: "To-day caught the white sparrow I had so long wished to catch."

His belief in the "Thirteen to Dinner" notion has also been recorded. His Journals abound in tokens of a deep and strong vein of superstitious feeling. The white sparrow omen does not stand alone. He believed in signs and portents, and his faith in dreams was not to be disturbed. Of his speculation in lotteries, the German purchase with Mr. Shackell is a very credulous instance. As long as English lotteries lasted, he spent much money in purchasing tickets; and he was influenced in the choice of numbers by curious and fantastical analogies.

HOOK ANSWERED.

Theodore Hook, in passing along Coventry-street one night, where a sewer was being repaired, looked down into the cavity, calling out to the workmen, "What are you about? What are you looking for?" The men at the bottom being much engaged, and not caring to answer Hook's repeated calls,

replied, "We are looking for a seven-shilling piece, which, perhaps, you want more than we do," to the no small amusement of the by-standers.

LOVE OF PLAY.

The observation that there are few persons who do not practise what they cease to censure, seems to have been exemplified in Hook's being addicted to gaming. This was, however, greatly exaggerated by rumour; but there can be no doubt that in the following passage from *Gilbert Gurney*, he pictures his own first introduction to the gaming-table, and the effect it had upon him:

"I must confess that, after ten minutes' sojourn in the midst of the motley group, all those alarms and prejudices which had been so prudently instilled into my mind, as to the horrors of gaming-houses, had utterly and entirely subsided; I saw nothing but good humour and good fellowship. Some won their tens, and twenties, and fifties, with perfect good nature; and others lost them with equal complacency. Daly made me sit down beside him—a box came—he called a main. I did not even know the term—'Seven's the main,' said Daly; he threw again and out came eleven, upon which the gentleman in the chair, with a rake in his hand, cried out, 'Eleven's a nick,' and immediately I saw my five pound note converted into a ten, by a process which appeared to me not only extremely simple but remarkably pleasant. Daly threw again, again called seven, and threw nine; a loud cry of five to four rang round the room.

"'Fifty to forty,' cried one.

"'Done,' bawled another.

"'Do it in fives, Colonel,' screamed a little man, very like a frog in the face, upon whose back an Irish gentleman was sitting or leaning, pushed forward by half-a-dozen eager spectators behind *him*.

"I heard nothing but 'Five to four' for a minute or two, varied with a cry of 'Nine to seven;' then a pause, broken only by the rattle of the dice, and then a call of—'Nine—the caster wins;' whereupon notes and guineas changed hands all round the outside rim of the table, and Daly swept up ten pounds as a stake, and five for his single bet."

It was Theodore, also, who, some years since, enlightened

the public as to the meaning of a word then more in use than at the present moment. "The room in St. James's Palace," he tells us, "formerly appropriated to hazard, was remarkably dark, and conventionally called, by the inmates of the palace, 'Hell.'* Whence, and not as generally supposed from their own demerits, all the gaming-houses in London are designated by the same fearful name. Those who play, or have played, English hazard, will recollect that, for a similar inconsequent reason, the man who raked up the dice, and called the odds, was designated 'the groom-porter.'"

"NOTES ON LONDON."

After Hook's death, his books were removed from Fulham, and sold by auction by Mr. Edmund Robins, at his rooms in Covent Garden, November, 1841. His library was neither extensive nor select. Lot 35, Ackermann's *Microcosm of London*, three vols., with many plates, possessed a peculiar interest from having been filled with his MS. notes, made in 1834, when he contemplated writing an account of the streets of London; these notes consisting principally of the changes made in the buildings since the views of them were engraved, or, in his words:

"1834.—I have made memoranda throughout this work of the alterations which have taken place in the buildings and institutions which it represents and illustrates between the period at which it was published and the present time—they strike me as curious.

"THEODORE E. HOOK."

* The Sovereign and the Royal Family formerly played at hazard in public in this room, at certain seasons—New-Year's-day and Twelfth-day, for instance—George I. and II. played here, but the custom was discontinued in the reign of George III.; the office of groom-porter is still kept up, and the names of three groom-porters occur among the inferior servants in the enumeration of her present Majesty's household.

Sir Henry Ellis, in 1839, saw in the possession of Mr. E. Hawkins, of the British Museum, a silver token marked to the amount of ten pounds, which appears to have passed among the players for the groom-porter's benefit at basset. It is within the size of a halfcrown: in the centre of the obverse is $\frac{L}{X}$.; legend round, AT · THE · GROOM · PORTER'S · BASSETT ·; mint-mark, a fleur-de-lis. On the reverse, a wreath and gold coronet; the coronet being of gold let in: legend, NOTHING · VENTURD · NOTHING · WINNS ·; mint-mark, again, a fleur-de-lis.

We quote a few of the more interesting of these notes: the majority are mere corrections.

Carlton House. Not a vestige of this building remains. On its site stand those splendid houses which form Carlton House Terrace—the United Service Club, and the Athenæum. Where were its gardens, the column to the memory of the Duke of York rears its head; and where its court-yard received the Prince's visitors, we find Waterloo-place—named after a victory for ever glorious, but not thought of when this print was engraved.

The Roman Catholic Chapel, Lincoln's Inn Fields. Since this print was engraved, the Roman Catholics have been emancipated. In 1780, the people were Protestant, and burned the chapel down, to secure themselves against Popish domination. In *our* times, the people went *with* the Papists, and their disabilities were removed.

The Royal Cockpit, Bird-cage Walk. This building no longer exists.

Covent Garden Market. The whole of Covent Garden Market has, since the publication of the opposite print, been pulled down, and rebuilt, in a convenient and even classical manner, by the ground landlord, the Duke of Bedford, who no doubt had raised his rents in proportion to the outlay.

Covent Garden Theatre. The theatre here represented ceases to exist. It was burned down in the October of the year in which the plate opposite was published. (1808.)

Debating Society (Meeting-room, 22, Piccadilly). The room here noticed ceases to exist. It sank before the magnificent improvements in the Quadrant, for which the people of London are indebted to the genius and indefatigable exertion of Mr. Nash—one of the worst used men in the world.

Lottery. Lotteries have been for some years abolished, but one, called the Glasgow Lottery, was drawn under a provision of an Act of Parliament, for improving that town, which had, through inadvertence, been smuggled into the Bill. This lottery was drawn during the present year; but unless some still newer alteration takes place, no lottery will again be drawn in *moral* England.

Old Bailey. In noting the reconstruction of the court, Hook says, "It has been done, I am told, in a manner, so as most conclusively to secure the impossibility of seeing or hearing."

Opera House. At the time this view was taken, the Opera

House was shut from the eye, on three sides, by houses and stables; and on the fourth, that in the Haymarket was a naked, unfinished brick front. Market-place, a wretched lane, into which the stage-door and chair-door then opened, has, in the completion of Mr. Nash's designs for the improvement of the metropolis, disappeared, and is succeeded by the Colonnade. The House is now insulated, and a continuation of Charles-street into the Haymarket has afforded the opportunity of carrying the Colonnade entirely round it, while the principal front offers to the view a beautiful and classic elevation.

The Pillory. Since the opposite print was published, every vestige of the buildings on the right-hand of the street has vanished from the face of the earth; and what perhaps may be more interesting to some people, the punishment of the Pillory has been abolished.

1834. The ordinary rate of stage-coach travelling is now ten miles an hour, and the time allowed for changing horses rather under than over one minute.

[We do not think much of Mr. Hook's taste or judgment in architecture: he notes: "the front of the *Bank of England*, (Soane's,) I am almost afraid to say, was very much handsomer as it was;" and of *Buckingham Palace*, he says, "I suspect, when time shall have overcome prejudice and jealousy, it will be duly appreciated."] Should not *when* be italicized?

Watch-house. In these days there are *no* watch-houses, *no* watchmen; that admirable body, the police force, has superseded the drones so well depicted in the opposite plate. The watchman was always known to be safe in his box till he went forth to cry the hour, and then by the noise he made it was perfectly easy to know where he was, and therefore to be where he was not.

Westminster Hall. Since this book was published, it has become a custom to abridge the splendour of coronations in this particular (the feast). The magnificent coronation feast of King George the Fourth was the last, as far as my lifetime goes, or is likely to go. King William the Fourth had no banquet; neither had his niece and successor, Queen Victoria.

The Workhouse, St. James's Parish. Since this was published, the Poor Laws *Amendment* Bill has overturned the whole system of parochial relief, has disturbed all the best arrangements for the poor, and rendered everybody connected

with the subject (always excepting the paid Commissioners) discontented and dissatisfied.

Hook, in one of his novels, describes "the *real London* as the space between Pall Mall on the south, and Piccadilly on the north, St. James's-street on the west, and the Opera House to the east."

HOW TO PAY TAXES.

Hook was delighting a few friends, one summer's evening, at Fulham, by an extempore comic song. When in the middle of it, the servant entered with, "Please, sir, here's Mr. Winter, the tax-gatherer; he says he has called for taxes." Hook would not be interrupted, but went on at the pianoforte, as if nothing had happened, with the following stanza:—

> "Here comes Mr. Winter, collector of taxes,
> I'd advise you to pay him whatever he axes;
> Excuses won't do, he stands no sort of flummery,
> Though Winter his name is, his process is *summary*.
> Fol de lol, &c.

PRIVATE MEDICAL PRACTICE.

Hook, in *Cousin William*, calls the aunt and uncle bold *Buchan*-eers, from their fondness for rash domestic medical practice, and doctoring themselves from Buchan. In describing the original of this aunt, at the Garrick, one morning, he declared that the old lady was so delighted with everything pertaining to physic, that she drank wine every six hours out of *dose-glasses*, and filled her gold-fish globes with leeches, the evolutions of which she watched by the hour.

MUCH ALIKE.

Two silly brothers, twins, were very much about town in Hook's time; and they took every pains, by dressing alike, to deceive their friends as to their identity. Tom Hill was expatiating upon these modern Dromios, at which Hook grew impatient. "Well," said Hill, "you will admit that they resemble each other wonderfully: they are as like as two peas." "They are," retorted Hook, "and quite as green."

HOOK'S PUNNING.

Hook was admirable in what he terms, "the very plums in the *pudding* of conversation"—punning, which he treats in this mock profound manner:

A punster (that is, a regular hard-going, thick-and-thin punster) is the dullest and stupidest companion alive, if he could but be made to think so. He sits gaping for an opportunity to jingle his nonsense with whatever happens to be going on, and, catching at some detached bit of a rational conversation, perverts its sense to his favourite sound, so that instead of anything like a continuous intellectual intercourse, which one might hope to enjoy in pleasant society, one is perpetually interrupted by his absurd distortions and unseasonable ribaldry, as ill-timed and as ill-placed as songs in an opera, sung by persons in the depth of despair, or on the point of death.

Admitting, however, the viciousness, the felonious sinfulness of punning, it is to be apprehended that the liberty of the pun is like the liberty of the press, which, says the patriot, is like the air, and if we have it not we cannot breathe. Therefore, seeing that it is quite impossible to put down punning, the next best thing we can do is to regulate it, in the way they regulate peccadilloes in Paris, and teach men to commit punnery as Cæsar died and Frenchmen dissipate—with decency.

The proverb says "wits jump," so may punsters, and two bright geniuses *may* hit upon the same idea at different periods quite unconsciously. To avoid any unnecessary repetition or apparent plagiarisms, therefore, by *these coincidences*, we venture to address this paper to young beginners in the craft—to the rising generation of witlings; and we are led to do this more particularly from feeling that the *tyro* in punning, as well as in everything else, firmly believes *that* which he for the first time has heard or read, to be as novel and entertaining to his older friends, who have heard it or read it before he was born, as it is to himself, who never met with it till the day upon which he so liberally and joyously retails it to the first hearers he can fall in with.

For these reasons we propose, in order to save time and trouble, to enumerate a few puns, which, for the better regulation of jesting, are positively prohibited in all decent societies where punnery is practised; and first, since the great (indeed, the only) merit of a pun is its undoubted originality—its unequivocal novelty—its extemporaneous construction and instantaneous explosion—all puns by recurrence, all puns by repetition, and all puns by anticipation, are prohibited.

In the next place, all the following *travelling* puns are strictly prohibited:—

All allusions upon entering a town to the *pound* and the *stocks*—knowing a man by his *gait* and not liking his *style*—calling a tall turnpike-keeper a colossus of *roads*—paying the post-boy's charges of *ways* and means—seeing no *sign* of an *inn*; or replying, sir, you are *out*, to your friend who says he does—talking of a hedger having a *stake* in the *bank*—all allusions to *sun* and *air* to a new-married couple—all stuff about village *belles*—calling the belfry a *court of a peal*—saying, upon two carpenters putting up a paling, that they are very peaceable men to be *fencing* in a field—all trash about "*manors* make the man," in the shooting season; and all stuff about trees, after this fashion: "that's a *pop'lar* tree"—"I'll turn over a new *leaf*, and make my *bough*," &c.

Puns upon field-sports, such as racing being a matter of *course*—horses *starting* without being shy—a good shot being fond of his *but* and his *barrel*—or saying that a man fishing deserves a *rod* for taking such a *line;* if he is sitting under a *bridge* calling him an *arch* fellow, or supposing him a nobleman because he takes his place among the *piers*, or that he will *catch* nothing but cold, and no fish by *hook* or by crook. All these are prohibited.

To talk of yellow pickles at dinner, and say the way to *Turn'em Green* is through Hammersmith—all allusions to eating men, for *Eton* men, *Staines* on the table-cloth—*Eggham*, &c. are all exploded; as is all stuff about *maids*, and *thornbacks*, and *plaice;* or saying to a lady who asks you to help her to the wing of a chicken, that it is a mere matter of *a pinion*—all quibbles about dressing *hare* and cutting it—all stuff about a merry fellow being given to *wine;* or, upon helping yourself, to say you have a *platonic* affection for roast beef; or, when fried fish runs short, singing to the mistress of the house, with *Tom Moore*,

> "Your *sole*, though a very sweet *sole*, love,
> Will ne'er be sufficient for me,"

are entirely banished.

At the playhouse never talk of being a *Pittite* because you happen not to be in the boxes—never observe whatever a *Kean* eye one actor has, or that another can never grow old because he must always be *Young*—never talk of the uncertainty of *Mundane* affairs in a farce, or observe how *Terry*-bly well a man plays Mr. Simpson—banish from your mind the possibility of saying the Covent Garden manager has put his best *Foot* forward, or that you should like to go to *Chester* for a day or two; or that you would give the world to be tied to a *Tree*, or that *Mr. Macready* is a *presentable* actor—all such stuff is interdicted.

In speaking of parliament, forget *Broom* and *Birch*, *Wood* and *Cole*, *Scarlett* and *White*, *Lamb* and the *Leakes*, the *Hares* and the *Herons*, the *Cooks* and the *Bruins;* such jumbles will lead into great difficulties, and invariably end, without infinite caution, in an observation that the conduct of that House is always regulated by the best possible *Manners*.

There are some temptations very difficult to avoid—for instance, last Saturday we saw gazetted as a bankrupt, "*Sir John Lade*, Cornhill, watchmaker." Now this, we confess, was a provocation hard of resistance. When one sees a lad of sixty-four *set up* only to *break down*, and perceives that whatever he may do with *watches*, he could not make a *case* before the Insolvent Debtors Court; and, moreover, since his taking to watchmaking arose from his having in the *Spring* of life gone upon *tick*, and that the circumstance may be considered as a *striking* instance of a *bad wind-up;* we admit that in the hands of a young beginner such a thing is quite irresistible; but such temptations should be avoided as much as possible.

We have not room to set down all the prohibited puns extant; but we have just shown that the things which one hears when one dines in the City (where men eat peas with a two-pronged fork, and bet *hats* with each other), as novelties, and the perfection of good fun, are all flat, stale, and unprofitable to those who have lived a little longer and seen a little more of the world, and who have heard puns when it was the fashion to commit them at the West end of the town.—*John Bull*, 1823.

JAMES AND HORACE SMITH.

JAMES AND HORACE SMITH BORN.

THESE two men of letters were the sons of an eminent legal practitioner, and solicitor to the Board of Ordnance. James was born at No. 36, Basinghall-street, London, on the 10th of February, 1775; and Horace, in the same house, on the 31st of December, 1779.

The father was a man of some literary attainments, and a member of the Royal Society, and the Society of Antiquaries. He had travelled much, and his ready wit and conversational powers made his society much sought after by an extensive circle of acquaintance. He did not, however, suffer these social qualities to interfere with the discharge of his professional duties; nor did he allow his fondness for literature to mislead him; and, although fond of versification, he took the earliest opportunity of writing "the lawyer's farewell to the Muse." The practice of the law is, undoubtedly, auxiliary to certain literary studies, as antiquities and personal and public history; but the *viginti annorum lucubrationes* leave little time or relish for poetical recreation.

THEIR SCHOOL.

James and Horace Smith were educated under the Rev. Mr. Burford, who kept a long-established school at Chigwell, in Essex. James was of a somewhat prankish turn. The large, old-fashioned schoolroom was surmounted by a sounding-board projecting from the wall. Up to this board James one day climbed to recover a Virgil, which had been thrown there; and, in searching among the dust and rubbish, the accumulation of many years, he found an old torn copy of Hoole's translation of Ariosto, which he had the good sense to appreciate. His brother Horace tells us, that James "would sit upon a tree, on the half-holidays, or wander in the fields,

devouring the contents of his treasure-trove, long after the curiosity of a first reading had been satiated. He preserved the tattered volume for many years: several passages of the Orlando Furioso remained indelibly impressed upon his memory; and in one of the latest poems that he composed he makes allusion to this favourite recreation of his boyhood." There are few among us who do not remember the earliest book, which made an impression ineffaceable by years: in the case of James Smith, the first book which gave an impulse to his genius was the Ariosto.

For his "school-boy spot," the village of Chigwell, James Smith ever retained a predilection, and he rarely suffered a long interval to elapse without visiting the place. He had a minute recollection of its scenery and picturesque views; and he had every field so mapped upon his mind, that he could detect the smallest alteration since his first entering the school. His brother tells us, that "to the spots whither a carriage or a horse could not convey him, he hobbled upon crutches, and thus contrived to reach the secluded nook or sequestered stream, where he had read or bathed upwards of fifty years before." He has left his recollections in two autobiographical poems, written at a late period of his life, when he was a sexagenarian pilgrim to Chigwell:—

More yew-trees never seem to grow:
The village stands *in statu quo*,
  Without a single new house.
But, heavens, how shrunk! how very small!
'Tis a mere step from Urnstone's wall,
  "Up town" to Morgan's brewhouse.

There, in yon rough-cast mansion, dwelt
Sage Denham, Galen's son, who dealt
  In squills and cream of tartar;
Fronting the room where now I dine,
Beneath thy undulating sign,
  Peak-bearded Charles the Martyr!

Pent in by beams of mouldering wood
The parish stocks stand where they stood—
  Did ever drunkard rue 'em?
I dive not in parochial law,
Yet this I know—I never saw
  Two legs protruded through 'em.

Here to the right rose hissing proofs
Of skill to solder horses' hoofs
  Form'd in the forge of Radley;
And there, the almshouses beyond,
Halfway before you gain the pond,
  Liv'd wry-mouth'd Martin Hadley.

Seek we the churchyard; there the yew
Shades many a swain whom once I knew,
Now nameless and forgotten;
Here towers Sir Edward's marble bier,
Here lies stern Vickery, and here,
My father's friend, Tom Cotton.

The common herd serenely sleep,
Turf-bound, "in many a mouldering heap"
Pent in by bands of osier;
While at the altar's feet is laid
The founder of the school, array'd
In mitre and in crosier.*

The lines on "Chigwell Revisited" thus pleasingly reflect its sweet spots:—

Strange that a village should survive
For ten years multiplied by five,
The same in size and figure.
Knowing nor plenty nor distress—
If foiled by fortune, why no less?
If favoured, why no bigger?

Say, why has population got
Speed-bound upon this level spot,
Undamaged by profusion?
A tyro, I the question ask—
Be thine, Miss Martineau, the task
To tender the solution.

* * * * *

Here hills and dales, and distant Thame,
And forest glens, green proof proclaim
Of Nature's lavish bounty,
And dub thee, lofty region, still
Surrey's tall foe, the Richmond Hill
Of this our eastern county.

Diverging from the road, the sod
I tread that once a boy I trod,
With pace not quite so nimble—
But where's the Maypole next the lane?
Who dared to banish from the plain
That wreath-encircled symbol?

* * * * *

Seek we the river's grassy verge,
Where all were destined to immerge,
Or willing or abhorrent;
I view the well-known "Mill-hole" still,
But time has dwindled to a rill
What seem'd, of yore, a torrent.

* Referring to Archbishop Harsnett: he endowed the Free-school at Chigwell, where William Penn was educated. The archbishop was buried in the church; and over his grave was his figure in brass, as large as life, dressed in his robes, with his mitre and crosier. This figure has since been placed upon a pedestal in the chancel.

Here, fell destroyer, many a wound
The woodman's axe has dealt around:
  Lee Grove in death reposes;
Yet while her Dryads seek their tombs,
The miller's moated garden blooms
  With all its wonted roses.

There, in yon copse, near Palmer's Gate,
Reclin'd, I mourn'd my hapless fate,
  Zerbino amoroso,
Glad to elope from both the schools,
"The world shut out," intent on Hoole's
  "Orlando Furioso."

* * * * *

I fear not, Fate, thy pendent shears—
There are who pray for length of years;
  To them, not me, allot 'em:
Life's cup is nectar at the brink,
Midway a palatable drink,
  And wormwood at the bottom.

These are grave thoughts for one who had played a very lively part in the drama of life. The diminutive form of objects, familiar in childhood, and seen again at a late period of life, is twice repeated in these stanzas with good effect.

JAMES SMITH IN THE LAW.

At the completion of his education, James Smith was articled to his father, was taken into partnership in due time, and eventually succeeded to the practice, as well as to the appointment of Solicitor to the Ordnance.

A DANGEROUS ADVENTURE.

Formerly, it was customary, on emergencies, for the judges to swear affidavits at their dwelling-houses. Smith was desired by his father to attend a judge's chambers for that purpose; but being engaged to dine in Russell-square, at the next house to Mr. Justice Holroyd's, he thought he might as well save himself the disagreeable necessity of leaving the party at eight, by despatching his business at once; so, a few minutes before six, he boldly knocked at the judge's door, and requested to speak to him on particular business. The judge was at dinner, but came down without delay, swore the affidavit, and then gravely asked what was the pressing necessity that induced our friend to disturb him at that hour. As Smith told the story, he raked his invention for a lie, but, finding none fit for the purpose, he blurted out the truth.

"The fact is, my lord, I am engaged to dine at the next house—and—and—"

"And, sir, you thought you might as well save your own dinner by spoiling mine?"

"Exactly so, my lord; but—"

"Sir, I wish you a good evening."

Though Smith brazened the matter out, he said he never was more frightened; for he had a prescriptive reverence for legal dignitaries, and we doubt whether an invitation from one of the royal family would have given him more gratification than an invitation from a judge. We well remember the pleasure with which he dwelt upon a dinner at Baron Gurney's, where he met Lord Denman; and his attachment to Lord Abinger was based full as much on that distinguished person's unrivalled forensic reputation, as on his general acquirements, literary taste, polished manners, and amiability. —*Law (Quarterly) Magazine.*

A LITERARY HOAX.

James Smith's *coup d'essai* in literature was a hoax in the shape of a series of letters to the editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, gravely detailing some remarkable antiquarian discoveries, and entomological wonders, the startling nature of which attested the inventive powers of the writer, without exciting the suspicion of his victim. The worthy Sylvanus Urban was fairly taken in, and great was the curiosity of some Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries for further details; and what added to the zest of the pleasantry was that Smith's father, and several of his antiquarian friends, who were regular readers of the Magazine, repeatedly commented upon these fictitious statements, without ever dreaming that the waggish author was sitting by their sides, and laughing in his sleeve at their conjectures.

THE PICNIC SOCIETY AND THE PICNIC PAPER.

Early in the year 1801, Colonel Greville, a gentleman of sporting celebrity, assisted by M. Taxier, gave a theatrical *fête*, with a picnic supper, to a select circle of his acquaintances. The success of this party led, in the following winter, to the formation of a regular establishment, limited to a certain number of subscribers, combining the amusements of acting, music, and dancing, a supper, and catches

and glees. Two hundred and thirty persons of rank were presently enrolled; a small theatre was fitted up in the old Concert-room, in Tottenham-street, and the orchestra was filled with amateur performers. The actresses were professionals; cards and dice were prohibited; and the surplus of the proceeds were to be applied to the relief of decayed actors. Here was an agreeable scheme of pleasure and benevolence; but it being *exclusive* in its plan, the Picnic Society was assailed by the public press, and all sorts of calumny and misrepresentation were used to intimidate the members. The performances, therefore, lasted only eight nights; and though Colonel Greville subsequently attempted to revive the scheme at the old Argyle-rooms,* upon the site of Regent-street, the society had soon no other representative than the *Picnic* newspaper, which Colonel Greville had started in 1802, for the purpose of defending the society, as well as checking the scandalous personalities which were constantly bespattering the aristocracy.

James Smith and Horace were associated as gratuitous contributors to the *Picnic*, with Mr. Cumberland, Sir James Bland Burges, Mr. Croker, Mr. J. C. Herries, and a few more gentlemen; the only paid contributor being Mr. Combe, who, many years after, wrote *Dr. Syntax*. To accommodate the latter gentleman, who appears to have had a *penchant* for living in the Rules of the King's Bench,† the weekly meetings at Hatchard's did not commence till night, when Combe, who was editor, might attend unobserved. As might be expected, the amateur newspaper did not last long; the "voluntary contribution" was either in plethora, or not at all; Combe had no authority over the volunteers; and the capital was almost exhausted. Matters grew worse: the title was changed to the *Cabinet*, which struggled, unprofitably, until July, 1803, and then disappeared. A selection from the *Picnic* papers, in two small volumes, was published in 1803.

For the *Picnic*, James Smith's passion for the drama prompted him to compose the satirical colloquies, in imitation

* This led Lord Byron to confer on Colonel Greville a not very enviable immortality—

> Or hail at once the patron and the pile
> Of vice and folly, Greville and Argyle.

† We remember to have visited Combe in the Rules, twenty years after this date.

of Dryden's Dialogues, the interlocution assuming ancient classical names, while discussing the merits of modern plays. Another set of papers was entitled *Endymion the Exile.*

Already James Smith had betrayed a tendency to parody, in poems imitating our popular bards—a talent upon which our author's future fame hinged.

POOR CONSOLATION.

One of James Smith's favourite anecdotes related to Colonel Greville, who having requested his young ally to call at his lodgings, in the course of their first interview related the particulars of the most curious circumstance in his life. He was taken prisoner during the American war, along with three other officers of the same rank; one evening they were summoned into the presence of Washington, who announced to them that the conduct of their Government, in condemning one of his officers to death, as a rebel, compelled him to make reprisals, and that, much to his regret, he was under the necessity of requiring them to cast lots without delay to decide which of them should be hanged. They were then bowed out, and returned to their quarters. Four slips of paper were put into a hat, and the shortest was drawn by Captain Asgill, who exclaimed, "I knew how it would be; I never won so much as a hit at backgammon in my life." As Greville told the story, he was selected to sit up with Captain Asgill, under the pretext of companionship, but in reality to prevent him from escaping, and leaving the honour amongst the remaining three. "And what," inquired Smith, "did you say to comfort him?" "Why, I remember saying to him, when they left us, *D— it, old fellow, never mind;*" but it may be doubted (added Smith) whether he drew much comfort from the exhortation. Lady Asgill persuaded the French minister to interpose, and the captain was permitted to escape.

WILLIAM COMBE.

We have already mentioned this clever man as the editor of the *Picnic.* His strange history would fill a volume. He was of good family connexion, was educated at Eton and Oxford, and very early in life came into the possession of a large fortune, in ready money. He took a mansion at the west end of London, furnished it sumptuously, and kept a first-rate

establishment, with servants, carriages, &c. This gay dream lasted but a year, when he was ruined, and fled from his creditors and society. We next hear of him as a common soldier, and indebted for the subscription that purchased his discharge to his having been discovered by one of the officers reading a Greek Æschylus in the guard-room. He then started in life as a man of letters, a ready writer of all work for the booksellers; but he lived mostly in the Rules of the King's Bench, or within the prison walls. Horace Smith tells us that he occasionally visited him in the Rules, and never left him without admiring his various acquirements and the equanimity with which he endured his reverses. His readiness was just what the *Picnic* required: if a column or two of the paper remained unsupplied at the last moment, an occurrence by no means unusual, Combe would sit down in the publisher's back-room, and extemporise a letter from Sterne at Coxwould, a forgery so well executed that it never excited suspicion. He also worked for Ackermann, in the Strand, for whom he wrote *Dr. Syntax's Tour in Search of the Picturesque*, in three volumes. It originated in some drawings by Rowlandson, the caricaturist, which being purchased by Ackermann, were handed to Combe, then in the King's Bench, and he fitted them with rhymes. They first appeared in a Poetical Magazine, and then the work grew to three volumes, of which large editions were sold. *Syntax* was succeeded by other works of the same class, ultimately extending to 295 prints, with letter-press. Besides works known to be his, Combe wrote *Lord Lyttelton's Letters*, and the Letters attributed to Sterne. The *Life of Anne Sheldon*, afterwards Mrs. Archer, in four volumes, containing anecdotes of persons of rank and fashion, though purporting to have been penned by herself, Combe is stated to have written while in the King's Bench prison. In the *Quarterly Review*, No. 179, it is attempted to prove that Thomas, Lord Lyttelton, wrote *Junius's Letters;* and as Combe wrote *Lord Lyttelton's Letters*, ergo, he is presumed to have been Junius! A long list of his works appears in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for May, 1852.

There is a portrait of Combe, painted by Lonsdale. Mr. Ackermann cleared much money by Combe's works; and it is gratifying to add that he paid him regularly, for the latter years of his life, a sum sufficient to support him respectably. In 1822 we received his assurance that he intended to write his own life; but this he failed to do.

"THE LONDON REVIEW."

This journal was started in 1809, by Cumberland, the dramatist, on the principle of each writer affixing his name to his criticism; but the speculation failed, and was soon discontinued. James Smith, at the solicitation of his friend Cumberland, contributed one paper—a review of Mrs. Rundell's *Domestic Cookery*. This is a very smart piece of writing, equal in humour and point to the long reviews of books which appear in the leading journals of the present day. The critic is speaking of the qualifications of the publishers of the work to estimate its merits: "Messrs. A. Constable and Co., of Edinburgh, must be pronounced by all impartial judges *superlatively* unfit to give evidence in the cause. A work which treats of oyster patties, green peas, ratafia cream, and London syllabub, must be as much a sealed book to our Scottish neighbours as that northern luminary Allan Ramsay is to us darkling natives of the south. The only effect it can produce in the shop-window of the aforesaid A. Constable and Co. is to quicken their countrymen in their journey southward (like the hay before the horse's nose in Ireland), and thus to overcome that bashful repugnance to visiting England, which has ever been the characteristic of a North Briton." Here are a few more specimens of this critical quizzing. "'How rarely,' exclaims our authoress, in a pathetic tone, 'do we meet with fine melted butter!' This calamity was not overlooked by our immortal bard, whose Moor of Venice bewails his want of that article with tears—

> Unused to the *melting mood*,
> Dropt tears as fast as the Arabian trees
> Their medicinal gums.

"Our heroine of jams and jellies thus proceeds: 'In the variety of female acquirements, though domestic occupations stand not so high as they formerly did, yet, when neglected, they produce much *human misery*. (*Here sighs a jar.*) There was a time when ladies knew nothing *beyond* their own family concerns. (*Here a goose-pie talks.*) But in the present day there are many who know nothing *about* them.'

"Ah, madam! this is a sober truth, though epigrammatically expressed. But under favour, is it not something like the conceited cook, in the fragment of the Greek poet Straton, who says to his master—

What! speak as Homer does:
And sure a cook may use like privilege,
And more than a blind poet.

"But mark the surly answer of the cook's master:

Not with me!
I'll have no kitchen Homers in my house;
So pray discharge yourself.

"Our fair purveyor of patty-pans is gifted with that variety of style, which, like her own recipes, is calculated to please all palates.

Milton's strong pinions now not heaven can bound,
Now serpent-like, in prose, he sweeps the ground.

"She informs us that 'to make home the sweet refuge of a husband fatigued by intercourse with a jarring world, to be his enlightened companion, and the chosen friend of his heart, these are the woman's duties;' and she adds, in the same breath, 'candles made in cool weather are best.' The reader is no sooner apprised that 'a pious woman will build up her house before God,' than he is told 'the price of starch depends upon that of flour.' Talents here find themselves placed in the same sentence with treacle; custards are coupled with conjugal fidelity, and moral duties with macaroni. This obliquity of pen, 'one eye on earth, the other fixed in heaven,' is the only sure mode of pleasing all readers. It forms the genuine hill and dale of style, and, when bounded by a modern meadow of margin, bids fair to circulate through ten editions." This was a safe prediction, for the *Domestic Cookery* has sold nearly 300,000 copies. By the way, Mr. Smith's account of the medley style of instruction is alike applicable to the heterogeneous compilations of the present day upon domestic economy, the compilers of which are almost as clever as the fellow who found a Moore's Almanac in a kitchen-drawer of the time of Shakspeare.

The London reviewer describes a bad carver to possess no more skill in the art than the executioner of the Duke of Monmouth; and he speaks of preferences in carving as "a difference of opinion between all people and some people, which is left to the arbitration of other people." "Nothing but practice will enable people to hit the joint exactly at the first trial," *i.e.* if you are perfected by practice, you will *hit the joint exactly at the first trial*, though you never tried before; just in the same manner as people learn to swim before going into the water!

"What a fine subject for a didactic poem is carving! What is Mr. Godwin about? It is well known that he addresses his writs to the late sheriff of London, who, upon such an occasion, would doubtless usher the bantling to light. It is true that the worthy knight eats no meat himself, since he ate up the heifer; but is that a reason why he should be so unmindful of those that do? Sir Richard Phillips, the Pythagorean, is the late sheriff alluded to; of whom a *Quarterly* reviewer said: 'although he will not eat animal food, he is addicted to gravy over his potatoes.'"

Mr. Smith returns to the love of order in the dictatrix, who "commences with the scaly tenants of the flood, and ends with recipes to prevent hay from firing, to wash old deeds, to preserve a head of hair, and to dye gloves to look like York tan or Limerick." He does not spare those nuisances of society, the givers of bad dinners, and appeals to the majority of his readers whether they are not in the habit of dining with some individual whom Nature seems to have manufactured without a palate. If you ask the footman of such an unhappy being for bread, you receive something possessing the consistence of a stone. His turbot has all the dignity of age, his port wine all the fire of youth. "His fish-cruets resemble the pitchers of the Belides; his champagne is a copartnership of tar-water and treacle, and his lobster-sauce is so alarmingly congealed as to be fitter for Salmon's waxwork than for salmon.

"The due arrangement of a dinner-table is not so easy as some folks imagine. Every one recollects the anecdote of the Gray's Inn student, who entertained his guests, consisting of two pining old maids and a bilious nabob, with boiled tripe at top, boiled tripe at bottom, and a round of beef, garnished with parsnips, in the centre. To give a proper dinner requires both taste and fancy, as well as money; and our authoress has supplied for those who possess little of either, 'a scale of dinners suited to all pockets;' loading the stomachs of her readers, as Lockit clogged the ankles of his customers, with fetters of all prices, from one guinea to ten." Lastly, he compares his going through this cookery-book to a journey through a delightful country, recalling to our recollection the juvenile tale of Miranda, or the Royal Rain; inasmuch as we are credibly informed that the air within the blissful domain of that woolly potentate, was darkened with showers of tarts and cheesecakes. After all, we suspect a cookery-book is

like a spelling-book: one contains a multiplicity of dishes never used, the other a heap of words never heard in the common course of life.

"THE MONTHLY MIRROR."

In 1796, when Tom Hill started his *Monthly Mirror*, the two Smiths became contributors of a series of practical illustrations, entitled *Horace in London*. More parodies were subsequently collected, and published in one volume, after the success of the *Rejected Addresses* had rendered the authors famous. Some of the pieces are humorous. In one stanza, James has here given a true sketch of his own character:

> Me toil and ease alternate share,
> Books and the converse of the fair
> (To see is to adore 'em);
> With these, and London for my home,
> I envy not the joys of Rome,
> The circus or the forum.

Hill must have been a most popular proprietor, since we find Horace Smith and his brother frequent guests at Hill's cottage; and, writing in 1840, Horace speaks with pleasure of his former host of Sydenham looking as fresh, as happy, and as young as at the merry meetings of their first acquaintance.

LOVE OF LONDON.

James Smith seems to have been as strongly attached to London as was Dr. Johnson himself. A confirmed metropolitan in all his tastes and habits, he would often quaintly observe that London was the best place in summer, and the only place in winter; or quote Dr. Johnson, "Sir, the man that is tired of London is tired of existence." At other times he would express his perfect concurrence with Dr. Moseley's assertion, that in the country one is always maddened with the noise of nothing; nevertheless, as we shall see in a future page, James Smith usually enjoyed his round of country visits.

He used to tell with great glee a story showing the general conviction of his dislike to ruralities. He was sitting in the library at a country-house, when a gentleman proposed a quiet stroll in the pleasure-grounds:—

"Stroll! why, don't you see my gouty shoe?"

"Yes, I see that plain enough, and I wish I'd brought one too, but they're all out now."

"Well, and what then?"

"Why, then, my dear fellow, you don't mean to say that you have really got the gout? I thought you had only put on that shoe to get off being shown over the improvements."

"THE REJECTED ADDRESSES."

This remarkable work, upon which the celebrity of James and Horace Smith arose, is one of the strangest of what are termed "the Curiosities of Literature," whether we regard the origin, the production, or the success of the book. It appeared on the re-opening of Drury-lane Theatre, in October, 1812; the idea, as Horace Smith relates, having been casually started by the late Mr. Ward, secretary to the theatre, exactly six weeks before the night when the opening address was to be spoken. The origin was simply as follows. The committee of management had issued an advertisement, requesting that addresses, one of which should be spoken on the first night, might be sent in by way of competition. As all the addresses sent in except one were to be rejected, Mr. Ward proposed a series of supposed "rejected addresses," written in the manner of some of the leading authors of the day. The suggestion thrown out was eagerly adopted. The brothers arranged what authors they should respectively imitate; and James executed his portion in London, and Horace the remainder at Cheltenham. James supplied the imitations of Wordsworth, Southey, Coleridge, Crabbe, and Cobbett, and Nos. 14, 16, 18, 19, and 20. The Byron was a joint effusion—James contributing the first stanza, and Horace the remainder. The Fitzgerald, the Sir Walter Scott, &c., were by Horace. The corrections which each supplied to the compositions of the other seldom exceeded verbal alterations or the addition of a few lines.

The original preface to the work is amusing, and tells us that 112 addresses were sent to the Committee, each sealed and signed, and mottoed, "as per order," some written by men of great, some by men of little, and some by men of no talent.

The editor does not think it necessary to mention the manner in which he became possessed of this "fair sample of the present state of poetry in Great Britain." He has culled

the flowers from the weeds, and thus diminished the collection to twenty-one.

In general, they bear a close resemblance to each other; thirty of them contain extravagant compliments to the immortal Wellington and the indefatigable Whitbread; and, as the last-mentioned gentleman is said to dislike praise in the exact proportion in which he deserves it, these laudatory writers have probably been only building a wall against which they might run their own heads.

* * * * * *

The Editor here begs leave to advance a few words in behalf of that useful and much abused bird the Phœnix; and in so doing he is biassed by no partiality, as he assures the reader he not only never saw one, but (*mirabile dictu!*) never caged one, in a simile, in the whole course of his life. Not less than sixty-nine of the competitors have invoked the aid of this native of Arabia; but as, from their manner of using him after they had caught him, he does not by any means appear to have been a native of Arabia *Felix*, the Editor has left the proprietors to treat with Mr. Polito, and refused to receive this *rara avis*, or black swan, into the present collection. One exception occurs, in which the admirable treatment of this feathered incombustible entitles the author to great praise; that Address has been preserved, and in the ensuing pages takes the lead, to which its dignity entitles it.

The authors having completed their work, offered the copyright to Mr. Murray, for 20*l.*, which he refused, without looking at the MS. He knowing that Mr. Smith was brother-in-law to Mr. Cadell, took it for granted that the MS. had been previously offered to him, and declined. However, the book was published, and great was its success. After it had run through sixteen editions, it was purchased in 1819, by Mr. Murray, for 131*l.* It has since had a large sale; and may now be bought for one shilling in Murray's Railway Series.

For the eighteenth edition, Horace Smith wrote a preface, full of droll humour, in which he admits "the truth of the remark made by a particularly candid and good-natured friend, who kindly reminded them, that if their little work has hitherto floated upon the stream of time, while so many others of much greater weight and value have sunk to rise no more, it has been solely indebted for its buoyancy to that specific levity which enables feathers, straws, and similar trifles to defer their submersion until they have become thoroughly saturated with the waters of oblivion, when they quickly meet the fate which they had long before merited."

It is then acknowledged that in the selection of the poets to be imitated, Rogers and Campbell were omitted, as they presented so much beauty, harmony, and proportion in their

writings, both as to style and sentiment, that if the authors had attempted to caricature them, nobody would have recognised the likeness; and if they had endeavoured to give a servile copy of their manner, it would only have amounted, at best, to a tame and unamusing portrait, which it was not our object to present.

A sort of *amende honorable* is then made for their burlesqueing Wordsworth, whom they now ardently admire.

Horace Smith, it appears, had sent in an address to the committee, which is here printed with the initials S. T. P. appended to it: it was thus noticed in the *Edinburgh Review* for November, 1812:—"An address by S. T. P. we can make nothing of; and professing our ignorance of the author designated by these letters, we can only add, that the Address, though a little affected, and not very full of meaning, has no very prominent trait of absurdity, that we can detect; and might have been adopted and spoken, so far as we can perceive, without any hazard of ridicule. In our simplicity we consider it as a very decent, mellifluous, occasional prologue; and do not understand how it has found its way into its present company."

The way in which the authors disposed of their MS. is very entertaining. "We little anticipated that the booksellers would refuse to publish our *Rejected Addresses*, even although we asked nothing for the copyright. Such, however, proved to be the case. Our manuscript was perused and returned to us by several of the most eminent publishers. Well do we remember betaking ourselves to one of the craft in Bond-street, whom we found in a back parlour, with his gouty leg propped upon a cushion, in spite of which warning he diluted his luncheon with frequent glasses of Madeira. 'What have you already written?' was his first question. 'Nothing by which we can be known.' 'Then I am afraid to undertake the publication.' A sort of parley ensued, the publisher tossed off another bumper, and promised to give an answer next day, when the papers were returned with the reply that the trifles, though smart, and vastly well for beginners, would *never do*—would not pay for advertising. What was to be done? The authors hesitated to publish on their own account; they had no objection to raise a laugh at the expense of others, but to do it at their own cost was out of the question. In this dilemma they applied to Mr. John Miller, a sensible dramatic publisher, then residing in Bow-street,

Covent-garden. He read the MS. and at once offered to take the risk, and give the authors half the profits, *should there be any.* The Smiths gladly agreed; and so rapid was the sale of the work, that Mr. Miller recommended the authors to collect their *Imitations of Horace*, which had appeared anonymously in the *Monthly Mirror*, offering to publish them upon the same terms. They did so accordingly; and as new editions of the *Rejected Addresses* were called for in quick succession, they were shortly enabled to sell their half copyright in the two works to Mr. Miller for one thousand pounds!!"

The opinions expressed upon the *Rejected Addresses* are worth quoting. Lord Byron wrote to Mr. Murray:

I think the *Rejected Addresses* by far the best thing of the kind since *The Rolliad*, and wish *you* had published them. Tell the author "I forgive him, were he twenty times over our satirist;" and think his imitations not at all inferior to the famous ones of Hawkins Browne.

Again:

I like the volume of *Rejected Addresses* better and better.

Jeffrey, in the *Edinburgh Review*, 1812, said:

We have no conjectures to offer as to the anonymous author of this amusing little volume. He who is such a master of disguises may easily be supposed to have been successful in concealing himself, and, with the power of assuming so many styles, is not likely to be detected by his own. We should guess, however, that he had not written a great deal in his own character—that his natural style was neither very lofty nor very grave—and that he rather indulges a partiality for puns and verbal pleasantries. We marvel why he has shut out Campbell and Rogers from his theatre of living poets, and confidently expect to have our curiosity, in this and in all other particulars, very speedily gratified, when the applause of the country shall induce him to take off his mask.

Nor did this opinion change with age; for, thirty-one years later, in 1843, we find in Lord Jeffrey's *Essays* this note:

I take the *Rejected Addresses* to be the very best imitations (and often of difficult originals) that ever were made; and considering their great extent and variety, to indicate a talent to which I do not know where to look for a parallel. Some few of them descend to the level of parodies; but by far the greater part are of a much higher description.

The *Addresses*, witty in themselves, were also the frequent source of oddity in others. Sir Walter Scott was among those deceived by the imitation of his muse:—"I certainly must have written this myself!" said that fine-tempered man to one of the authors, pointing to the description of the Fire, "although I forget upon what occasion." Lydia White, a

literary lady who was prone to feed the lions of the day, invited one of the authors to dinner; but, recollecting afterwards that William Spencer formed one of the party, wrote to the latter to put him off, telling him that a man was to be at her table whom he "would not like to meet." "Pray, who is this whom I should not like to meet?" inquired the poet. "Oh!" answered the lady, "one of those men who have made that shameful attack upon you!" "The very man upon earth I should like to know!" rejoined the lively and careless bard. The two individuals accordingly met, and continued fast friends ever after.

James Smith used to dwell with much pleasure on the criticism of a Leicestershire clergyman: "I do not see why they (the *Addresses*), should have been rejected: I think some of them very good." Upon another tack was the old lady's remark in the stage-coach, "Why make such a fuss about Addresses that were Rejected?"

Upon the whole, (says Horace Smith,) few have been the instances, in the acrimonious history of literature, where a malicious pleasantry like the *Rejected Addresses*—which the parties ridiculed might well consider more annoying than a direct satire—instead of being met by querulous bitterness or petulant retaliation, has procured for its authors the acquaintance, or conciliated the good-will, of those whom they had the most audaciously burlesqued.

FORTUNATE HITS.

James Smith was once handsomely rewarded for a very trifling production of his muse. He had met at a dinner-party Mr. Andrew Strahan, the King's printer, then suffering from gout and old age, though his faculties remained unimpaired. Next morning, James despatched to Mr. Strahan the following:

Your lower limbs seem'd far from stout
When last I saw you walk;
The cause I presently found out
When you began to talk.
The power that props the body's length,
In due proportion spread,
In you mounts upwards, and the strength,
All settles in the head.

Mr. Strahan was so much gratified by the compliment, that he made an immediate codicil to his will, by which he

bequeathed to the writer 3,000*l.*! Horace Smith, however, mentions that Mr. Strahan had other motives for his generosity, for he respected and loved the man quite as much as he admired the poet.

James made a happier, though, in a pecuniary sense, less lucky epigram on Miss Edgeworth:

> We every-day bards may "anonymous" sign—
> That refuge, Miss Edgeworth, can never be thine.
> Thy writings, where satire and moral unite,
> Must bring forth the name of their author to light.
> Good and bad join in telling the source of their birth;
> They had their own *Edge*, the good own their *worth*.

EVERY-DAY LIFE.

James Smith was a member of the Athenæum Club, as well as of the Union: the latter he describes as chiefly composed of merchants, lawyers, members of parliament, and of "gentlemen at large." He thus describes a day's life:

Let me enlighten you, as to the general disposal of my time. I breakfast at nine, with a mind undisturbed by matters of business; I then write to you, or to some editor, and then read till three o'clock. I then walk to the Union Club, read the journals, hear Lord John Russell deified or *diablerized* (that word is not a bad coinage), do the same with Sir Robert Peel or the Duke of Wellington, and then join a knot of conversationists, by the fire, till six o'clock, consisting of lawyers, merchants, members of parliament, and gentlemen at large. We then and there discuss the 3 per cent. consols (some of us preferring Dutch 2½ per cent.), and speculate upon the probable size, shape, and cost of the New Exchange. If Lady Harrington happen to drive past our own window in her landau, we compare her equipage to the Algerine Ambassador; and when politics happen to be discussed, rally Whigs, Radicals, and Conservatives, alternately, but never seriously, such subjects having a tendency to create acrimony. At six the room begins to be deserted; wherefore I adjourn to the dining-room, and gravely looking over the bill of fare, exclaim to the waiter, "Haunch of mutton and apple-tart." These viands despatched, with the accompanying liquids and water, I mount upward to the library; take a book and my seat in the arm-chair, and read till nine. Then call for a cup of coffee and a biscuit, resume my book till

eleven, afterwards return home to bed. If I have any book here, which particularly excites my attention, I place my lamp on a table by my bed-side, and read in bed until twelve. No danger of ignition, my lamp being quite safe, and my curtains moreen. Thus ends this strange eventful history, &c.

COUNTRY VISITS.

It will be seen that James Smith was much more *un homme de société* than his brother Horace. The former, notwithstanding his rooted objection to "grinding the gravel," as he termed an excursion into the country, usually paid visits to friends in the summer and autumn. For many consecutive seasons, he even travelled so far as Yorkshire, to make long visits to the Earl of Mulgrave. It was upon one of these excursions that he purchased his favourite grey mare, which carried him, without a stumble, until both were worn out together, when he gave unwilling orders, shortly before his death, that she should be shot.

Mr. James Smith was also a visitor at the Deepdene; at Mr. Croker's, at Moulsey; at Lord Abinger's, at Abinger Hall. Then, near Guildford, he paid visits to the Rev. Mr. Handford, who in a letter to Mr. Horace Smith, describes his brother in this delightful country retreat. "When I knew him," says Mr. Handford, "acute suffering had begun to cast a softening shade over his character; and the judicious advice, the enlightened criticism, the comprehensive philosophy, which then formed the staple of his discourse, won from all the homage which some would have denied to a wit, and preserved the dignity of the educated gentleman from merging into the professional gaiety of the jester. We used to look almost with veneration on the poet, sinking under a disease which left him scarcely for a moment free from pain, and yet firmly repressing the slightest indication of what he suffered; sitting for hours under the favourite birch-tree on the sunny lawn, and dwelling with delight on the calm loveliness of a landscape, not often equalled even in this country, or, as he himself used to express it, not only umbrageous in itself, but 'casting all other places into the shade.' Here he used to sit, the centre of a chosen circle—a living commentary on the literature of his country—recalling the past from the treasures of what I must be permitted to call a *gigantic memory*, and illustrating the present with happiest union of taste, humour,

and good judgment." * * * To those who knew James Smith, his conversation was a rich and glorious stream, now flowing through clear depths, now sparkling with a graceful ripple.

"The moderation of his character was really most apparent on the usually exciting subject of politics. He professed, I believe, moderately Conservative opinions, but on no occasion could we betray him into anything like a positive declaration in company. 'My political opinions,' he once said, 'are those of the lady who sits next to me, and as the fair sex are generally "perplexed like monarchs, with the fear of change," I constantly find myself Conservative.'"

"Mr. Smith, you *look* like a Conservative," said a young man across the table, thinking to pay him a compliment. "Certainly, sir," was the prompt reply; "my *crutches* remind me that I am no member of *the movement* party."

DEATH OF JAMES SMITH.

The easy, social, bachelor-life of James Smith was much impaired by hereditary gout. He lived temperately, and at his club-dinner restricted himself to half a pint of sherry. Sir William Aylott, a grumbling member of the Union, and a two-bottle man, observing Smith to be thus frugally furnished, eyed his cruet with contempt, and exclaimed, "So, I see you have got one of those cursed life-preservers."

Nevertheless, attacks of gout began to assail him in middle life, and he gradually lost the use and the very form of his limbs; still, he bore all his sufferings, his brother states, with "an undeviating and unexampled patience." One of the stanzas of his poem on Chigwell displays his philosophic composure at this period of his life :—

> World, in thy ever busy mart
> I've acted no unnoticed part—
> Would I resume it? oh, no!
> Four acts are done, the jest grows stale;
> The waning lamps burn dim and pale,
> And reason asks—*Cui bono?*

He held it a humiliation to be ill, and never complained, or alluded to his sufferings. He died on the 24th of December, 1839, aged sixty-three; and was buried in the vaults of St. Martin's church.

His portrait was painted by Lonsdale, of Berners-street.

In a letter to Mrs. Holme, Smith says: "On the death of the painter, his goods and chattels will come to the hammer." This prediction was verified, and he purchased the portrait: it is engraved in large size, and as the frontispiece to his *Memoirs, Letters,* &c.

His portrait was also engraved, in the same plate with his brother's, as a frontispiece to the *Rejected Addresses.*

"BRAMBLETYE HOUSE."

Horace Smith wrote considerably more than his brother James, whose Miscellanies and Letters occupy but two slight volumes, published soon after his death. Horace was more attached to the country, and a visit to one of the most picturesque parts of the county of Sussex suggested the subject of his first novel. In the year 1825, he was much struck with the ruin of Brambletye House, on the borders of Ashdown Forest, a short distance from East Grinstead. Charmed with the surrounding scenery, and pleased with the story of Brambletye, Mr. Smith took up his abode at the principal inn at Forest-row, and there wrote his historical novel of *Brambletye House,* receiving inspiration from the locality—the secret of clothing thoughts with real life, and swelling a rivulet of truth into a broad river of fiction.

The Manor of Brambletye, towards the middle of the seventeenth century, came into the possession of the Comptons, an eminent and distinguished family; and here Sir Henry Compton built himself, from an Italian design, Brambletye House. The Comptons were heavy sufferers, both in purse and person, during the Civil Wars; and in these troublous times, the mansion was the focus of many a Cavalier conspiracy. From its not being a place of any great strength or note, it was imagined that Brambletye might better escape the Protector's eye, ever fixed upon the strongholds of the defensible mansions of the nobility and gentry. The opening chapter of the novel is laid here, and contains some well-drawn sketches of the country. The novelist, however, soon leaves Brambletye for another land; but his *dénouement* is brought about by the explosion of a gunpowder-vault, which destroys part of the mansion—an incident which may have been suggested by the blackened portion of the ruin, which remains to this day. On the marriage of the hero and heroine, Brambletye House was abandoned; "and the time that has

intervened since its desertion," says Mr. Horace Smith, "combined with the casualty and violence by which it was originally shattered and dismantled, has reduced it to its present condition of a desolate and forlorn ruin."

Mr. Smith's novel soon became very popular, and has sent hundreds of tourists to the site of Brambletye. A Scottish critic has described the author as "one of the first imitators of Sir Walter Scott, in his historical romances:" if "one of the first," he was also the best. The same critic objects to its description of the Plague of London being copied too literally from Defoe. This is, surely, a venial shortcoming.

Other novels followed from the same pen: including *Tor Hill; Reuben Apsley; Zillah, a Tale of the Holy City; The New Forest; Walter Colyton; Jane Lomax; The Moneyed Man; Adam Brown; Arthur Arundel;* &c.: the latest being *Love and Mesmerism*, 1845.

The author appears thus to have produced some sixty volumes. In addition, he contributed numerous pieces of poetry, half playful, half sentimental, to the *New Monthly Magazine*, while it was under the editorship of Thomas Campbell, the poet. These pieces, with many pure sketches of life and character, have been collected in three volumes, entitled *Gaieties and Gravities*. They are very pleasant reading.

HORACE SMITH.

On the completion of his education, Horace, after due preparation, became a member of the Stock Exchange, became possessed of property, and retired to Tunbridge Wells, where he died, on the 12th of July, 1849, in the seventieth year of his age; and was buried in the churchyard of Trinity church, Tunbridge Wells.

Mr. Shelley said once: "I know not what Horace Smith must take me for sometimes: I am afraid he must think me a strange fellow; but is it not odd, that the only true generous person I ever knew, who had money to be generous with, should be a stockbroker? 'And he writes poetry, too," continued Mr. Shelley, his voice rising in a fervour of astonishment—"he writes poetry and pastoral dramas, and yet knows how to make money, and does make it, and is still generous." The poet also publicly expressed his regard for Mr. Smith:—

> Wit and sense,
> Virtue and human knowledge, all that might
> Make this dull world a business of delight,
> Are all combined in H. S.

JAMES SMITH'S BACHELORSHIP.

HIS bachelorship is thus attested in his niece's album :—

Should I seek Hymen's tie
As a poet I die,
Ye Benedicts mourn my distresses!
For what little fame
Is annexed to my name,
Is derived from *Rejected Addresses.*

His solitary state, however, certainly proceeded rather from too discursive than too limited an admiration of the sex; for, to the latest hour of his life, he gave a marked preference to their society, and disliked a dinner-party composed exclusively of males.

HIS PUNS.

A capital pun has been very generally attributed to him. An actor, named Priest, was playing at one of the principal theatres. Some one remarked, at the Garrick Club, that there were a great many men in the pit. "Probably clerks, who have taken Priest's orders." The pun is perfect, but the real proprietor is Mr. Poole, one of the best punsters and satirists of the day, says the *Law Magazine;* though we have generally heard this pun claimed for Charles Lamb.

Here are a few of James's puns :—

Lord Hertford, Croker, and myself, were at an exhibition of pictures, one of them, a domestic scene, I think by Mulready, represented a husband carving a boiled leg of mutton. The orifice displayed the meat red and raw, and the husband was looking at his wife with a countenance of anger and disappointment. "That fellow is a fool," said Lord Hertford; "he does not see what an excellent *broil* he may have."

TO AN ACTOR.

I venture this advice to U:
On entering O P, mind your Q.
Strive to X L, or men of spirit
Will quickly W in merit.
If these my hints are rightly prized,
You'll on your shoulders keep A Y Z.

Did I tell you of a pun of mine upon ——, who, since the obtaining his pension, has ceased to write—viz. that he was a *pen-shunner*. Not so very bad: tell this to your husband. Count D'Orsay called on me yesterday. The mixture of gaiety and good sense in his conversation, makes him always most acceptable to me, &c.

Dignum made an odd mistake one night at supper at Vauxhall. One of the party, enlivened by arrack, gave the following toast: "A speedy death to all who hate us." Dignum filled his glass, and exclaimed, "With all my heart—a speedy death to all the *waiters*."

We once had a dinner party at Mathew's, Young the actor making one. I observed how odd it was that the great satirist of Rome should be *Juvenal*, and the great satirist of England should be *Young*. "Yes," said Hook, "and there is a man at table who is *Young*, and not *Juvenile*." This, of course, overstepped his conceit, and set the table in a roar, &c.

He used to maintain that Mademoiselle *Mars* was not the real appellation of the great actress, but only a *nom de guerre*.

When John Kemble lived in Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, (the house was taken down when the western wing of the British Museum was built,) he had one of his windows made double, so as to keep out the street noise. Upon this James Smith wrote:

Rheumatic pains make Kemble halt,
He, fretting in amazement,
To counteract the dire assault,
Erects a double casement.
Ah! who from fell disease can run?
With added ills he's troubled;
For when the glazier's task is done,
He finds his panes are doubled.

The following upon Surnames is ingenious and amusing:

Men once were surnamed for their shape or estate
(You all may from history worm it),
There was Louis the Bulky, and Henry the Great,
John Lackland, and Peter the Hermit.

But now, when the door-plates of misters and dames
Are read, each so constantly varies;
From the owner's trade, figure, and calling, surnames
Seem given by the rule of contraries.

Mr. Wise is a dunce, Mr. King is a whig,
Mr. Coffin's uncommonly sprightly,
And huge Mr. Little broke down in a gig,
While driving fat Mrs. Golightly.
At Bath, where the feeble go more than the stout
(A conduct well worthy of Nero),
Over poor Mr. Lightfoot, confined with the gout,
Mr. Heavyside danced a bolero.

Miss Joy, wretched maid, when she chose Mr. Love,
Found nothing but sorrow await her;
She now holds in wedlock, as true as a dove,
That fondest of mates, Mr. Hayter.
Mr. Oldcastle dwells in a modern-built hut;
Miss Sage is of madcaps the archest,
Of all the queer bachelors Cupid e'er cut,
Old Mr. Younghusband's the starchest.

Mr. Child, in a passion, knocked down Mr. Rock;
Mr. Stone like an aspen-leaf shivers;
Miss Poole used to dance, but she stands like a stock
Ever since she became Mrs. Rivers.
Mr. Swift hobbles onward, no mortal knows how,
He moves as though cords had entwined him;
Mr. Metcalf ran off upon meeting a cow,
With pale Mr. Turnbull behind him.

Mr. Barker's as mute as a fish in the sea,
Mr. Miles never moves on a journey,
Mr. Gotobed sits up till half after three,
Mr. Makepeace was bred an attorney.
Mr. Gardener can't tell a flower from a root,
Mr. Wild with timidity draws back,
Mr. Ryder performs all his journeys on *foot*,
Mr. Foot all his journeys on horseback.

Mr. Penny, whose father was rolling in wealth,
Consumed all the fortune his dad won;
Large Mr. Le Fever's the picture of health;
Mr. Goodenough is but a bad one;
Mr. Cruikshank stept into three thousand a year
By showing his leg to an heiress.
Now I hope you'll acknowledge I've made it quite clear,
Surnames ever go by contraries.

TOP AND BOTTOM.

The following playful colloquy in verse took place at a dinner-table between Sir George Rose and James Smith, in allusion to Craven-street, Strand, where the latter resided:

J. S.—"At the top of my street, the attorneys abound,
And down at the bottom the barges are found:
Fly, honesty, fly, to some safer retreat,
For there's craft in the river, and craft in the street."

Sir G. R.—"Why should honesty fly to some safer retreat,
From attorneys and barges, od rot 'em?
For the lawyers are *just* at the top of the street,
And the barges are *just* at the bottom."

FIRST AND SECOND.

A gentleman with the same Christian and surname took lodgings in the same house. The consequence was, eternal confusion of calls and letters. Indeed the postman had no alternative but to share the letters equally between the two. "This is intolerable, sir," said Smith, "and you must quit." "Why am I to quit more than you?" "Because you are James the Second, and must *abdicate*."

LORD AND LADY ESSEX.

James used to relate that Lord Essex kept a portrait of a lady in his bed-room, always covered by a curtain of green silk. He says: "On one of my visits to Cashiobury, when the family were at church, I stole into that apartment and laid bare the mystery. Nothing equal to it in the Mysteries of Udolpho. I met at a dinner party yesterday the intimate friend of the late Lady Essex. That lady, a few days before her death, made my informant read to her all the love letters written to her in the days of courtship by her subsequently alienated lord. What a mournful retrospect! I knew her a few years before their separation. Good-humoured, fat, elderly, and deaf. I remember their joint portraits in the exhibition. *Sic transit gloria amoris.*"

SELF-DOCTORING.

One day Dr. Paris, talking to James Smith of the folly of patients prescribing for themselves, quoted a fable of Camerarius. An ass laden with salt was crossing a brook. The water diluted the salt and lightened the burden. He communicated his discovery to a brother donkey laden with *wool*. The latter tried the same experiment, and found his load double its weight.

SHAKSPEARIAN CRITICISM.

I have found out a blunder in Shakspeare! (writes James Smith). Hamlet writes to Ophelia thus:

Doubt that the stars are fire,
Doubt that the earth doth move,
Doubt truth to be a liar,
But never doubt I love.

He means to state a series of self-evident propositions. But to doubt the truth to be a liar is the very reverse of this. He should have said, "Believe truth to be a liar." This may possibly have been hit on by some of the commentators, but I am not aware of it.

We *doubt* the correctness of this criticism.

BLESSINGTONIANA.

James Smith was a bright star in the circle in which Lady Blessington shone with so much brilliancy. He was in the habit of sending her ladyship, occasionally, epigrams, complimentary scraps of verse, or punning notes, like the following:—"The newspapers tell me that your carriage is very highly varnished. This, I presume, means your wheeled carriage. The merit of your personal carriage has always been, to my mind, its absence from all varnish. The question requires that a jury should be *impanelled*."

Or this—

"DEAR. LADY BLESSINGTON,—When you next see your American friend, have the goodness to accost him as follows:

"In England rivers all are males—
For instance. Father Thames;
Whoever in Columbia sails,
Finds them ma'amselles or dames.

"Yes, there the softer sex presides,
Aquatic, I assure ye,
And Mrs. Sippy rolls her tides,
Responsive to Miss Souri.

"Your ladyship's faithful and devoted servant,
"JAMES SMITH."

SLAVERY.—AN IMPROMPTU, WRITTEN AT GORE HOUSE.

Mild Wilberforce, by all belov'd,
Once owned this hallow'd spot;
Whose zealous eloquence improv'd
The fetter'd Negro's lot.

Yet here still Slavery attacks
Whom Blessington invites;
The chains from which he freed the Blacks,
She fastens on the Whites.

James greatly admired Lady Blessington's powers of conversation; he loved to mingle amongst social, literary, and political celebrities; and he thought Count d'Orsay one of the most agreeable and most accomplished men he had ever known. At Lady Blessington's request, Smith frequently contributed to her *Book of Beauty:* for example, the verses on Mrs. Lane Fox and Mrs. Verschoyle.

Lady Blessington used to say that if James Smith had not been a man of wit, he would have achieved a much higher reputation.

Another house at which James Smith visited was Lord Harrington's. He was a nice observer of manners, and the perfect high-breeding which characterized every member of the Stanhope family, was exactly to his taste.

He used to relate that when George the Third was perplexed by any intrigue at Windsor Castle, he used to say—"Well, I'll go and ask Lady Harrington; she is sure to tell me the truth."

MATHEWS AT HOME.

James Smith loved Thalia better than Themis—the drama better than the law. He had a ready store of wit and humour for the actors; and could write a comic song, a hit at the follies of the day, or a jocose epilogue, with great success. He was *looked up to* by the actors, and his memory would occasionally fix the date of half-forgotten pieces, in which they themselves had performed. With a keen sense of the ridiculous, a quick perception of character, and a ready command of sparkling dialogue, he sketched scenes admirably.

When Charles Mathews the elder commenced giving his entertainments, Monopolylogues, he called them, he had to look out for an author, and his choice prudently fell upon James Smith. Horace Smith tells us that "this kind of piece was so congenial to the general character of his brother's mind and tone of his conversation," as to be thrown off with a marvellous facility. An olio of songs, jokes, puns, and laughter-stirring merriment, occasionally rising into wit, but more frequently assuming the character of farce and extravaganza—was mere pastime to a mind like his, which was an inexhaustible storehouse of such materials.

"Smith is the only man," Mathews used to say, "who can write clever nonsense;" and of all living humorists Mathews was the refined, intellectual wag, and dramatic imitator best calculated to give full and irresistible effects to "clever nonsense." Both might well deem themselves fortunate in their alliance. Smith wrote three of these "At Home" pieces for Mathews, which he performed at the English Opera-house, with prodigious effect and profit; indeed, they were so successful as to induce the managers of Drury-lane and Covent Garden theatres to attempt to interdict their performance—but they failed. The pieces written by Smith were, *A Trip to Paris, Country Cousins, Air-ballooning,* and *a Trip to America.* It is said that the author's portion somewhat resembled a framework, and that Mathews filled it up with jests and stories, as best hit the audience. The comic songs were, unquestionably, Smith's, and they have never been surpassed in their line.

Mr. Mathews, who was a liberal and generous man, paid James Smith one thousand pounds for these three entertainments—a sum to which the recipient seldom made allusion without shrugging up his shoulders and ejaculating, "A thousand pounds for nonsense!" At other times, he would contrast this large amount with the miserable fifteen pounds given to Milton for his *Paradise Lost;* reconciling himself, however, in the disproportion by quoting from the well-known couplet, that the "real value of a thing is as much money as 'twill bring;" and adding, that his scrimble-scramble stuff always filled the theatre, and replenished the treasury.

Smith tells us that Mathews was a very troublesome man to write for; captious and timid as to effects; and that he and Mrs. Mathews used to drill him into his songs.

JAMES SMITH AND BULWER.

In the year 1839, James Smith, in a letter, relates: "I dined yesterday with E. L. Bulwer, at his new residence in Charles-street, Berkeley-square, a splendidly and classically fitted-up mansion. One of the drawing-rooms is a *fac-simile* of a chamber which our host visited at Pompeii. Vases, candelabra, chairs, tables to correspond. He lighted a perfumed pastille modelled from Vesuvius. As soon as the cone of the mountain began to blaze, I found myself an inhabitant of the devoted city; and, as Pliny the elder, thus addressed

Bulwer, my supposed nephew—'Our fate is accomplished, nephew! Hand me yonder volume! I shall die as a student in my vocation. Do you then hasten to take refuge on board the fleet at Misenum; yonder cloud of hot ashes chides thy longer delay. Feel no alarm for me—I shall live in story. The author of Pelham will rescue my name from oblivion.' Pliny the younger made me a low bow," &c.

There must be some mistake in this record: the house in Charles-street on the north side, is certainly not a mansion, but a dwelling of moderate size, between Berkeley-square and "The Running Footman" public-house. The following entry, which relates to a visit to the same house, is more correct: "I dined on Saturday with ——. The gorgeous pictures did not of course please me, who have been characterised as disliking gaudy and showy colours. The M.P. presently remarked, that such furniture is all right in an old baronial hall, but to encounter it in a small house in a London street, is too startling a transition. The inner drawing-room, fitted up from a model at Pompeii, is in more classical, and therefore in better taste. Here are busts of Hebe, Laura, Petrarch, Dante, and other worthies. Laura like our Queen," &c.

(FROM JAMES SMITH'S LETTERS.)

He was, one day, asked by the Countess Guiccioli what was meant by Grub-street, when he explained to her the locality of that venerable haunt of the Muses, in the days of Pope and Swift, by a quotation from himself:

A spot near Cripplegate extends,
Grub-street 'tis called, the modern Pindus,
Where (but that bards are never friends)
Bards might shake hands from adverse windows.

"What was all that Madame Guiccioli was saying to you just now?" inquired Count d'Orsay of James Smith. "She was telling me her apartments are in the Rue de Rivoli, and that if I visited the French capital, she hoped I should not forget her address." "What! it took her all that time to say that? Ah, Smeeth, you old humbug! that won't do."

Our dinner party yesterday at H——'s chambers was very lively. Mrs. —— was dressed in pink, with a black lace veil. Her hair smoothed, with a knot behind, and a string of small pearls across her forehead. H—— was the lion of the dinner table, whereupon I, like Addison, did maintain my

dignity by a stiff silence. An opportunity for a *bon mot*, however, occurred, which I had not virtue sufficient to resist. Lord L—— mentioned that an old lady, an acquaintance of his, kept her books in detached bookcases, the male authors in one and the female in another. I said, I suppose her reasons were, she did not wish to increase her library.

I don't fancy *Painters*. General Phipps used to have them much at his table. He once asked me if I liked to meet them. I answered, No! I know nothing in their way, and they know nothing out of it.

He puzzled some wags who were making charades at the Garrick, with the following: "An old post, a swing, and a daub of a picture, make a bad sign." They all gave it up; whereupon said Smith, "It is a truism: these materials *do* make a bad sign."

Moore, one day, described to Smith his meeting the Duchess of Kent and the Princess Victoria in a country house, and singing duets and trios with them. The Queen had then a small thin voice, but was a very good musician, her mother an excellent one.

A Calvinistic lady, whose brother had turned Unitarian, was reminded that he, notwithstanding, was a good man. "That very circumstance," said the sister, "proves that he is a doomed man. The devil is so sure of him for his want of faith, that he does not take the trouble to corrupt his morals."

RETORT LEGAL.

"What with briefs and attending the Court, self and clerk,
I'm at my wits' ends," muttered Drone the attorney.
"I fear 'tis a medical case," answered Shark—
"You're terribly tir'd by so little a journey."

COUNTRY COMMISSIONS.—THE ANSWER.

Can I pocket St. Paul's like an apple,
Take Waterloo Bridge in my teeth,
Mount astride the Green Dragon, Whitechapel,
And fight all the butchers beneath?
Can I eat bank-directors by dozens,
Put the National Debt in a dish?
If I cannot, my dear country cousins,
I cannot do half what you wish.

Bargains.—"You must know Mrs. Backhouse!—she lives in Castle-street, Holborn, and spends the whole morning in picking up things remarkably cheap. She bought the late

Irish giant's boots; she has no occasion for them at present, but they may come into play. Last Wednesday, she met with a capital bargain in Brokers'-row, Moorfields—a brass door-plate, with Mr. Henderson engraved upon it: it only cost her ninepence half-penny. Should anything happen to Backhouse, and she be afterwards courted by anybody of the name of Henderson, there is a door-plate ready."

Out-door Statues.—"I hate Russell-square, with its erect bronze Duke of Bedford, looking up towards Bloomsbury-square after his recumbent bronzed friend Fox. Poor Charles! only think of making him, at his time of life, sit down on a white marble sofa, bareheaded in the open air! The last time I saw him he had a lap full of snow."

Willoughby's wife is evangelic: they have been married seven years, and have no family. Women, in that case, always take to old china, geology, charity, poodle-dogs, or evangelism. Mrs. Willoughby selected the last. Willoughby would not take to the collar for a long time; but wives are always victorious in the end. Tom straightway mended his manners: cautiously abstained from rapping out an oath; and deposed Swift's *Tale of a Tub* from his bookshelf, that Cunningham's *Velvet Cushion* might reign in its stead. Well, affairs were in this state, when, happening to be walking very disconsolately in the Green Park, with his hands in his breeches-pockets, and whistling, "I sigh and lament me in vain!" he popped upon Jack Hammersley—by no means one of "the elect"—so far from it, quite the *re-verse*, as Mat the Fulham coachman expresses himself. Well, Hammersley seizes him by the elbow, and exclaims, "Damme, Tom, how d'ye do?" Upon which Tom Willoughby, quite forgetting the new part he had to play, answered, "Thank ye—that's comfortable—that's the first oath I've heard these six months!"

"*Home, sweet home!*"—"I never knew the value of domestic felicity," said Mrs. Lumm, "until I heard that song. It is always sure to make me wish myself back in Bruton-street, or indeed *anywhere but where I am when I hear it.*"

"This is enough to try a man's fortitude," said a person very tender of his age. "It should have done that ten years ago," answered the tormentor, "at present, it must try your *fifty*-tude."

There is one dreadful inconvenience in the Chain Pier at Brighton: you must come back the way you came; so that it is impracticable to cut any vulgar people whom you may see approaching. There are, to be sure, two or three little side shops where they sell ginger-beer, into which you may bolt; but these are far too small and too few for the occasion.

One who affected the military, ventured to hint that a *lancer* would not be of much service in modern warfare; but he was set right by a friend exclaiming, "My dear sir, you may depend upon it that a lancer, with that long instrument, would poke you about and make you very unhappy."

A Nice Dinner.—A sprawling bit of bacon upon a tumbled bed of greens, two gigantic antediluvian fowls, bedaubed with parsley and butter; a brace of soles, that perished from original inability to flounder into the ark; and the fossil remains of a dead sirloin of beef.

"You should see Kemp Town. It is built by the Rev. Mr. Kemp. They say he is a seceder: I don't know why they call him so. Papa says, it is because you see the sea from his new buildings."

TO A WEALTHY VINEGAR MERCHANT.

Let Hannibal boast of his conquering sway,
Thy liquid achievements spread wider and quicker;
By vinegar he through the *Alps* made his way,
But thou through the *world* by the very same liquor.

What a life is that of a governess! becoming attached to children, and then torn from them to form other attachments, and experience similar separations.

Obliteration of Ideas.—So long ago as the year 1782, a subject for dissection was brought to the then residence of Sir William Blizard, in Lime-street. John Haynes had been, by profession, a thief and housebreaker, and had, in consequence, finished his career at Tyburn. The body showed signs of life, and Sir William perfected its recovery. Anxious to know the sensations which John Haynes had experienced at the moment of his suspension, the surgeon questioned the thief earnestly upon the subject. All the answer he obtained was as follows:—"The last thing I recollect was going up Holborn-hill in a cart. I thought then that I was in a beautiful green field—and that is all I remember till I found myself in your honour's dissecting-room."

"Well, but, my dear sir," said Sir William Blizard, in his emphatic manner, "beautiful green fields! you must surely mistake: there are no fields between Holborn-hill and Tyburn, but those in which the church of St. Giles was built, and they have been brick, stone, and mortar this many a year; besides, there was Middle-row to pass, and the north end of Drury-lane; not to mention the portal of the church I have alluded to, over which the Judgment-day is carved in bronze—this surely must have arrested the attention of a gentleman in your situation."

It was all to no purpose; there was no recalling to the mind of John Haynes any local object beyond the parish church of St. Andrew's, Holborn. The surgeon was sorely puzzled: he had some reading in metaphysics, and more than some in anatomy; but here was a clear case of obliteration of all ideas immediately preceding the catastrophe in the cart. They had not merely faded from the man's mind; they were forcibly driven out of it, and no effort of the brain could suffice to recal them.

Love of London.—Who has not heard of the Duke of Buckingham, who was driven from London to Mulgrave Castle, in Yorkshire, by the Great Plague? On the abatement of that scourge, in the autumn of the same year, the Duke made preparations for returning to his favourite Mall in St. James's Park. His rural tenants waited upon him in a body to bewail his departure, and respectfully asked when they might hope to see him again. "Not till the next plague," answered his Grace.

The Duke of Queensberry must be well remembered by most middle-aged inhabitants of the metropolis. Often has my disembodied shade flitted under Lord William Gordon's wall, opposite the veteran's Piccadilly residence, to gaze upon him, with his straw hat, green parasol, and nankeen trowsers, bleached by repeated ablutions. "Does not your Grace find London very empty?" bawled a morning visitor in his soundest ear, on the fifteenth day of a hot September. "Yes," answered the Duke; "but it is fuller than the country."—*Grimm's Ghost.*

A lady was listening to Lord Erskine's account of the people at the North Pole, and when he mentioned that the natives clothe themselves in the skins of the seals and eat their flesh—"What! live upon the *seals?*" exclaimed the

lady, with a look of horror. "Yes, madam," answered Lord Erskine, "and devilish good living, too, if one could but keep them."

At one period, John Kemble had a strange fancy to be a fine gentleman: he took to playing Charles Surface and Don Felix, of which latter personation George Colman said, it possessed too much of the Don, and too little of the Felix.

Dignum, the Singer, being a Roman Catholic, attended, on the invitation of Mr. Cobbett, to enliven that gentleman's Catholic dinner-party at Kensington. His first song, "And ye shall walk in silk attire," was observed particularly to gratify Mr. O'Connell, prophetic as it appeared to be of the counsellor's forensic exaltation. Dignum, after this, dozed. The Catholic question was discussed, and when the two wings were noisily talked of, Dignum, starting from his slumber, exclaimed, "Yes, if you please, and some tongue: wings are nothing without tongue."

That a man so immersed as Dignum was in his profession, should not be very accurately informed in matters of political history, will not be a source of much surprise. Thus, he imagined the Diet of Worms to mean the vault of all the Capulets. When asked whether he approved of the Edict of Nantz, he answered, "Aye, certainly; brandy cannot be too cheap." On hearing that Mr. Calvert had determined to *canvass* the borough, he exclaimed, "I'm glad of it. I only wish he had done it before: I got wet through yesterday, between Guy's Hospital and Tooley-street.

"You all knew Charles Tessier?" (*Omnes*, "All, all.") "Well, after living some years in Austin Friars, he took to high life, and went up to Grosvenor-street. He was invited one day to dine with a dandy colonel, (whose promissory note he had endorsed,) in Upper Brook-street. In stalked little Charles, at seven; and meaning to do a bit of grandeur, exclaimed, 'I can't think what could be the matter with my horses just now. The coachman could hardly manage them. He was obliged to drive them three times round Grosvenor-square to make them quiet.' 'Why, the fact is, Tessier,' said Danvers, the banker, 'they were frightened—they did not know where they were. If they had been in Finsbury-square, they would have been quiet enough.'"

APPENDIX.

JUSTICE TO SHERIDAN.

Upon a review of the various opinions expressed upon the political conduct of Sheridan, the least indulgent reader must, we think, allow that, considering his great services to the Whig party, but scant justice has been meted out to this Tyrtæus of a somewhat truant school. In the *Memorials and Correspondence* of Fox, are thus recorded the intrigues by which Sheridan gave much umbrage to the Whig party: "As to Sheridan, I think him even more gone than I had supposed. I dined with him one day at Brookes's, and one at Lord G. Cavendish's, and he certainly was rather run at, but he seemed to grow worse and worse. The chief subject was, however, the Irish question, and upon that alone I could not judge him; but there are two systems which I consider as deadly. 1st. He would not own to me that nothing had come of what he had undertaken at Lord Moira's. If anything, what? was a natural question on my part. 'Can I see you to-morrow?' was his reply. 'Why not go into the other room now?' said I. This was at Brookes's. But he said he could not *just then*, and no more passed about it, though we met the next day: of course he had nothing to say, but his disowning this is a very bad sign. But the worst of all was his going out of the House on the day of the Report, because he had heard a report that Francis was to say something about the Prince's being employed. If even where the Prince's name is in question, and on a subject upon which his (the Prince's) eagerness is well known, Sheridan does not differ from the Doctor—the inference is too plain."

Francis Horner says, in his letters to Jeffrey, that Fox was ready to consent to Sheridan being a Cabinet Minister in 1806, but that the Duke of Bedford opposed him; and it is in the same place affirmed that the "blabbing" propensities of Sheridan disqualified him. We have had some "blabbing" Cabinet Ministers since Sheridan's time.

STAMP RECEIPTS.

The stamp-duties on receipts were first introduced during the short administration of "All the Talents." Charles Fox,

as usual, was in pecuniary difficulties; and the following was penned on the occasion by Sheridan, to whom, by the way, the lines are equally applicable :—

"I would," says Fox, "a tax devise,
That shall not fall on me;"
"Then tax receipts," Lord North replies,
"For those you *never* see."

BUBBLES OF 1825.

By THEODORE HOOK, *in John Bull.*

TUNE—"*Run, neighbours, run.*"

RUN, neighbours, run, you're just in time to get a share
In all the famous projects that amuse John Bull;
Run, take a peep on 'change, for anxious crowds beset us there,
Each trying which can make himself the greatest gull.
No sooner are they puff'd, than an universal wish there is
For shares in mines, insurances, in foreign loans and fisheries:
No matter where the project lies, so violent the mania,
In Africa, New Providence, Peru, or Pennsylvania!
Run, neighbours, run, you're just in time to get a share
In all the famous bubbles that amuse John Bull.

Few folks for news very anxious at this crisis are,
For marriages, and deaths, and births, no thirst exists;
All take the papers in, to find out what the prices are
Of shares in this or that, upon the brokers' lists.
The doctor leaves his patient—the pedagogue his lexicon,
For mines of Real Monte, or for those of Anglo-Mexican:
E'en Chili bonds don't cool the rage, nor those still more romantic, sir,
For new canals to join the seas Pacific and Atlantic, sir.
Run, neighbours, run, you're just in time to get a share
In all the famous bubbles that amuse John Bull.

At home we have projects, too, for draining surplus capital,
And honest Master Johnny of his cash to chouse;
Though t'other day Judge Abbott gave a rather sharpish slap at all,
And Eldon launched his thunder from the Upper House.
Investment banks to lend a lift to people who are undone;
Proposals for assurance—there's no end of that in London;
And one amongst the number, who in Parliament now press their bills,
For lending cash at eight per cent. on coats and inexpressibles.
Run, neighbours, run, you're just in time to get a share
In all the famous bubbles that amuse John Bull.

No more with her bright pails the milkman's rosy daughter works,
A company must serve you now with milk and cream;
Perhaps they've some connexion with the advertising waterworks,
That promise to supply you from the limpid stream.

Another body corporate would fain some pence and shillings get,
By selling fish at Hungerford, and knocking up old Billingsgate;
Another takes your linen, when it's dirty, to the suds, sir,
And brings it home in carriages, with four nice bits of blood, sir.
Run, neighbours, run, you're just in time to get a share
In all the famous bubbles that amuse John Bull.

When Greenwich coaches go by steam on roads of iron railing, sir,
How pleasant it will be to see a dozen in a line;
And ships of heavy burthen over hills and valleys sailing, sir,
Shall cross from Bristol's Channel to the Tweed or Tyne.
And Dame Speculation, if she ever fully hath her ends,
Will give us docks at Bermondsey, St. Saviour's and St. Catherine's;
While side-long bridges over mud shall fill the folks with wonder, sir,
And lamp-light tunnels all day long convey the cockneys under, sir.
Run, neighbours, run, you're just in time to get a share
In all the famous bubbles that amuse John Bull.

A tunnel underneath the sea, from Calais straight to Dover, sir,
That qualmish folks may cross by land from shore to shore,
With sluices made to drown the French, if e'er they would come over, sir.
Has long been talk'd of, till at length 'tis thought a *monstrous bore*!
Amongst the many scheming folks, I take it he's no ninny, sir,
Who bargains with the Ashantees to fish the coast of Guinea, sir;
For, secretly, 'tis known that another brilliant view he has,
Of lighting up the famous town of Timbuctoo with oil gas.
Run, neighbours, run, you're just in time to get a share
In all the famous bubbles that amuse John Bull.

Then a company is form'd, though not yet advertising,
To build upon a splendid scale, a large balloon,
And send up tools and broken stones for fresh Mac-Adamizing
The new-discover'd turnpike-roads which cross the moon.
But the most inviting scheme of all, is one proposed for carrying
Large furnaces to melt the ice which hems poor Captain Parry in;
They'll then have steam-boats twice a-week to all the newly-seen land,
And call for goods and passengers at Labrador and Greenland!
Run, neighbours, run, you're just in time to get a share
In all the famous bubbles that amuse John Bull.

EPITAPH ON GEORGE COLMAN THE YOUNGER.

In 1836, Mr. James Smith wrote the following lines for the tomb of his friend, George Colman the Younger:

Colman, the Muse's child, the Drama's bride,
Whose works now waken joy, or grief impart;
Humour with pathos, wit with sense allied,
A playful fancy and a feeling heart,
His task accomplish'd, and his circuit run,
Here finds at last his monumental bed;
Take, then, departed Shade, this lay from one
Who lov'd thee living, and laments thee dead.

CAUTIONARY VERSES TO YOUTH OF BOTH SEXES.

(BY MR. HOOK; FROM THE CHRISTMAS BOX.)

My readers may know that to all the Editions of Entick's Dictionary, commonly used in schools, there is prefixed "A Table of Words that are alike, or nearly alike, in Sound, but different in Spelling and Signification." It must be evident that this table is neither more nor less than an early provocation to punning; the whole mystery of which vain art consists in the use of words, the sound and sense of which are at variance. In order, if possible, to check any disposition to punnery in youth, which may be fostered by this manual, I have thrown together the following adaptation of Entick's hints to young beginners, hoping thereby to afford a warning, and exhibit a deformity to be avoided, rather than an example to be followed: at the same time showing the caution children should observe in using words which have more than one meaning.

My little dears, who learn to read,
Pray only learn to shun
That very silly thing indeed
Which people call a pun.
Read Entick's rules, and 'twill be found
How simple an offence
It is to make the selfsame sound
Afford a double sense.

For instance, *ale* may make you *ail*,
Your *aunt* an *ant* may kill,
You in a *vale* may buy a *veil*,
And *Bill* may pay the *bill*.
Or if to France your bark you steer,
At Dover it may be,
A *peer appears* upon the *pier*,
Who, blind, still goes to *sea*.

Thus one might say, when to a treat
Good friends accept our greeting,
'Tis *meet* that men who *meet* to eat
Should eat their *meat* when meeting.

O,O

Brawn on the *board's* no *bore* indeed,
Although from *boar* prepared;
Nor can the *fowl*, on which we feed,
Foul feeding be declared.

Thus *one* ripe fruit may be a *pear*,
And yet be *pared* again,
And still be *one*, which seemeth rare
Until we do explain.
It therefore should be all your aim
To speak with ample care;
For who, however fond of game,
Would choose to swallow *hair*?

A fat man's *gait* may make us smile,
Who has no *gate* to close!
The farmer sitting on his *stile*
No *stylish* person knows.
Perfumers men of *scents* must be;
Some *Scilly* men are bright;
A *brown* man oft *deep read* we see,
A *black* a wicked wight.

Most wealthy men good *manors* have,
However vulgar they,
And actors still the harder slave,
The oftener they *play*.
So poets can't the *baize* obtain
Unless their tailors choose;
While grooms and coachmen not in vain
Each evening seek the *Mews*.

The *dyer*, who by dyeing lives,
A *dire* life maintains;
The glazier, it is known, receives
His profits from his *panes*.
By gardeners, *thyme* is tied, 'tis true,
When spring is in its prime;
But *time* or *tide* won't wait for you
If you are *tied* to *time*.

Then now you see, my little dears,
The way to make a pun;
A trick which you, through coming here
Should sedulously shun.
The fault admits of no defence;
For wheresoe'er 'tis found,
You sacrifice the *sound* for *sense*,
The *sense* is never *sound*.

So let your words and actions too
  One single meaning prove,
And, just in all you say or do,
  You'll gain esteem and love.
In mirth and play no harm you'll know
  When duty's task is done;
But parents ne'er should let ye go
  Un*punished* for a *pun*.

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